LIBER STUDIORUM

NOTES

ON THE

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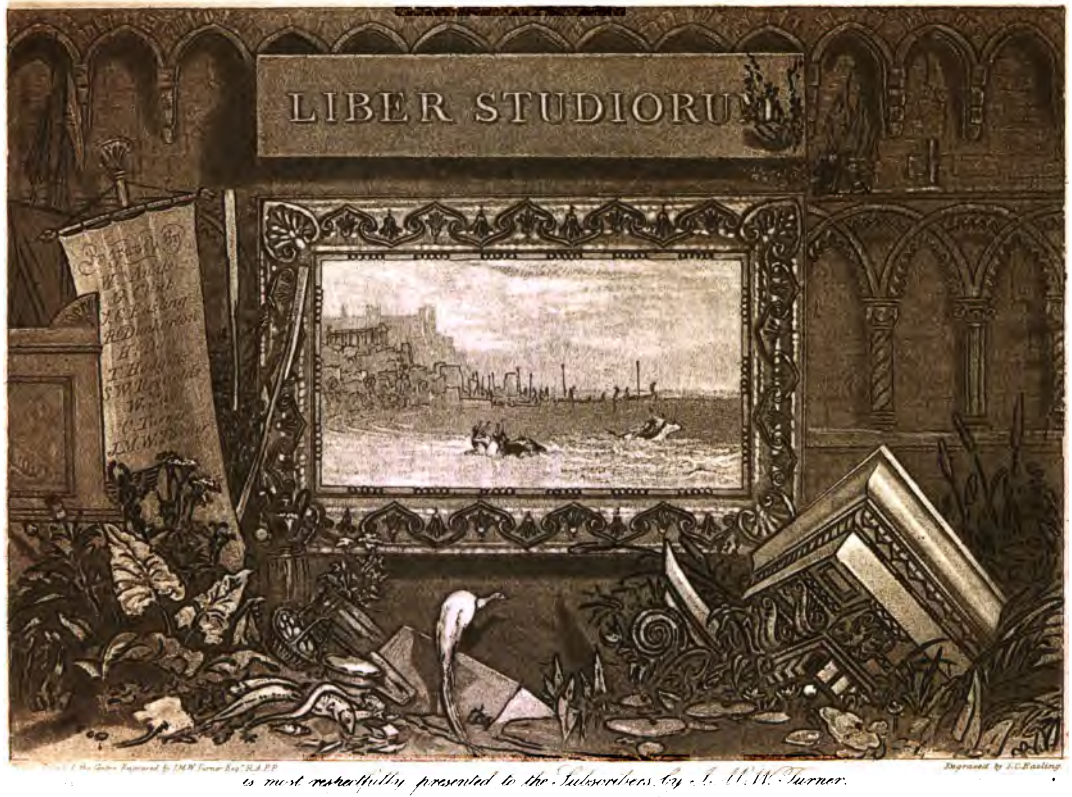
This FRONTISPIECE *to*



Engraved by J.C. Easling

is most respectfully presented to the Subscribers by J. M. W. Turner.

NOTES

ON THE

LIBER STUDIORUM

OF

J. M. W. TURNER, R.A.

BY

THE REV. STOPFORD BROOKE, M.A.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON
THE AUTOTYPE COMPANY, 74, NEW OXFORD STREET
HY. SOTHERAN AND CO., 36, PICCADILLY
136, STRAND
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1885

I

DEDICATE THIS BOOK TO

A FRIEND.

IT is with much diffidence that I publish these Notes on the Liber Studiorum apart from the Autotypes they were at first written to illustrate; but some of those who possess the original plates have been good enough to express a wish to have the commentaries in the shape of a book; and I indulge a hope that a few among the public may be pleased to read something more about the most enduring record of Turner's mind.

On reading over last Autumn what I had done, I was not satisfied with it. I have therefore re-written a great portion of the original matter, and thrown it, perhaps, into better form. Nevertheless, I must beg my readers to excuse a certain amount of repetition. Turner conceived a number of these plates—those especially in which the sun sets over ancient buildings—in a similar tone of sentiment, and the comment must take note of this repeated feeling; but I trust that the expression of the same thought has been sufficiently varied not to be disagreeable. I have also been obliged to repeat—for the commentaries are intended to be read along with the separate plates—certain statements with regard to the methods used by Turner in etching and in mezzotint-engraving.

The book has been a happy task during the winter months, and if it should give a little new pleasure to those who love Nature and reverence the great artist who interpreted her mystery so well, I shall gain all the reward I desire or deserve.

STOPFORD A. BROOKE.

July, 1885.

CONTENTS.

PREFACE

TO THE COLLECTION OF AUTOTYPES.

THE Liber Studiorum was begun by Turner in rivalry with the Liber Veritatis of Claude, but to compare the two books together would be unfair to Claude. Claude's drawings were slight records of his pictures, hurriedly flung off, and he had nothing to do with the mezzotints made of them which appeared long after his death. Turner's book was made up of original studies carefully drawn, and conceived for the purpose of engraving—etched on the copper by himself, their engraving carried on day by day under his own eye, and sometimes done by his own hand. The plates, therefore, in the two books cannot be justly set one against another. That which can be contrasted is the method and power of composition of the two men, their truth to nature, their imagination of their subject, their sentiment, their range, their disposition of light and shade, their capacity of grasping the real and of idealizing it truthfully. Turner began his book by the plate of the *Bridge and Goats*, which everyone can see is done in rivalry with Claude. But he soon

wearied of this half imitation, and though there are other "classical landscapes" in the Liber Studiorum, the majority of the plates are done out of his own heart, and bear his character upon them. They are always composed, that is, they are not absolute transcripts of any scene in Nature. He drew when he was at the place the impression it made upon him, and he arranged what he drew according to certain laws which have been followed by artists for centuries. But the methods of composition, from long habit of them, had become a part of himself, so that he practised them unconsciously, as a man walks without taking note of his movements. He drew also landscapes which 'flashed upon his inward eye' in solitude, such as the *Hindoo Devotions* and the *Procris and Cephalus*, and these also were composed into a beautiful harmony, so that they seem to be the product of Nature herself in those moments when she works like an artist—consciously, with as it were a human soul within her, striving after beauty. It is the fashion to call these composed landscapes ideal, but they are never ideal in the sense of being false to physical fact. On the contrary, they inform us concerning Nature, and concentrate into a short space a multitude of truths belonging to mountain, river, tree, sea, cloud, and plain; each of which was won from long observation of Nature, by steady work done hour by hour for many years in the open air. Every drawing then is a record, first, of individual emotion, and, secondly, of natural fact; and these, harmonized by imagination into a complete subject, are

wrought together in obedience to laws of composition which generation after generation of painters have elaborated in careful practice.

The publication of the book began in 1807, and was carried on at intervals for twelve years until 1819, at which year Turner was forty-four years old. Seventy-one plates were issued, and then, there being but small sale for the work, the publication was dropped. Of the remaining thirty plates—for the original plan, excluding the Frontispiece, was to embrace a hundred—some were finished, others had only advanced as far as the etching, and some only existed in the drawing. A few proofs, etchings, and nearly all the drawings of these unpublished plates are in various collections. Turner classified those that were published under six heads—marked by letters above the plate. A., architectural; P., pastoral; E. P., elegant pastoral, or as Mr. Pye thinks, epic pastoral; M., marine; M., or M^e., mountainous; H., historical, or perhaps heroic. Many engravers were employed: Charles Turner, William Say, Dunkarton, Clint, Easling, Lupton, Dawe, S. W. Reynolds, Hodgetts, and for the aquatint subject of the *Bridge and Goats*, F. C. Lewis; and full information may be gained about their work, and about all matters relating to the Liber Studiorum, combined with admirable criticism, in the catalogue compiled and written by Mr. Rawlinson.[1]

As to the method employed, the first thing Turner did was to make a drawing of the subject in sepia for the

[1] Published by Macmillan and Co.

guidance of the engraver. These drawings are in the National Gallery. They are the ghosts of what they were, and are almost in every case, and naturally so, inferior to the prints. The copper was then sent to Turner, who, with a few exceptions, etched with the needle the essential lines of the subject, always with a reference in his own mind to the mezzotint which was to be added. When the plate was etched and bitten in, the engraver roughened the whole plate with a multitude of little projecting points of copper made by a special tool, and resembling the papillæ of the tongue. This is the mezzotint, or more properly, the *bur*. 'All these points catch the ink in printing, and would yield an intense black were they not removed. They are accordingly partially removed with the scraper when lighter darks are required, and the lighter the passage the more the bur is cleared away, till finally in high lights it is removed altogether, and the plate in these places is burnished.'[1] It is plain then, that the mezzotint engraver can gradate the light and shade of his plate from absolute black to pure white, or rather from the deepest dark to the highest light—and no better vehicle could have been chosen for engraving his drawings by an artist who, like Turner, was a master of gradation, and especially careful in developing his whole subject from or towards a dominant light. The engravers were not then left to themselves. Turner had proofs of the plates at various stages of the rubbing down sent to him, and wrote on

[1] Hamerton's "Etching and Etchers," ch. ii., p. 81.

them his instructions and advice, following the engraving almost day by day, and sometimes working on the plate with his own hands. A few he mezzotinted and engraved himself, and I have drawn attention to some curious things in these plates. When finished, they were printed off, but owing, first, to the rapid wearing away of the less raised, that is the most rubbed-down *bur*, and, secondly, to the polished parts becoming roughened by the friction used in cleaning the plate, the relation of tints in these mezzotints was gravely affected and changed after about thirty or forty impressions were taken. Hence it is only those early impressions, called First States, which show us the subject as Turner originally conceived it in dark and light; and when retouching became necessary, the second state was arrived at, and when again necessary—the third.

All the photographs here given have been taken, with one exception, from first states, and it is time now to give some details about them.

Some time ago, the Autotype Company asked whether I should advise them to republish their first reproduction of the Liber Studiorum, and brought me the photographs to look at. I thought them worthless, and said so. They did not resemble, even at a distance, the originals, and the most of them were taken from inferior impressions. I then offered to lend them one of my prints to make a trial of, and said that the first thing to be done was to photograph it full size, with the plate mark, and the second to engage the services of some person accus-

tomed to engraving to follow in the negative the deeper and more important lines of the etching. For the great difficulty of photographing any of the Liber Studiorum is that wherever the mezzotint is dark, the etched lines are scarcely seen in the photograph. In the original these lines are the strength, the life, the story of the whole; they support, enliven, reveal the mezzotint; without them the plate is a body without bones, and this use of the etching is most valuable at those very places where the mezzotint is darkest, that is, where the photograph necessarily fails to clearly reproduce them. They are to be detected, however, by a close-looking eye, only they are flatted down to the surface of the photograph, not emergent and triumphant as they are in the engraving. "Is it not possible, then," I said, "since they are there, to follow them carefully with a needle, and get them clear in the photograph? If you can do this, you may succeed better than at present seems possible." The attempt made with this single plate appeared to me sufficiently good to encourage the Company to undertake the whole work. This particular difficulty of the etched lines was partly overcome in the manner indicated, but only partly, because there were many places where the etched lines could not be seen upon the negative, and rather than put in what could not be followed accurately, I advised the photographers to leave the negative alone.

The next great difficulty was gradation of tint. In a plate like *Hind Head Hill*, all the dark hills are varied from point to point of shade with exquisite skill of en-

graving. Not an inch of the plate is of the same depth. The photograph cannot reproduce this, and the result is uniformity of gloom; therefore, in this plate as in some others, where there are great masses of gradated shadow, the only thing for the photographer to do is to recognize his limits, and leave alone and untouched what he cannot help. In these particular portions, therefore, the reproduction fails, but it fails from the necessity of the case. Nothing more could be done. Another difficulty of the same kind can be met in some plates, as, for example, in the *Dunstanborough*, where the foreground is almost black, while the sky is of delicate purity of light. If the plate be exposed long enough to get the dark, the sky is ruined; if the lightness of the sky be kept, the foreground is not made dark enough. The only thing to be done in this case was to modify the printing power of different portions of the plate. Another difficulty arose from the different colours of the ink in which Turner caused the plates to be printed, and another from the different textures of the mezzotint. The chemical rays were more effective in catching some tints than others, and they also seized on some textures more successfully than on others.

The difficulties, then, have been very serious, and when they are considered, I think that the success of the Autotype Company has been far greater than could have been expected. Some of the plates are better than others, but none are without worth. They can never be said to approach the proofs, but they give a fair idea for three

shillings and sixpence of originals which are now to be obtained but rarely, and at a high price. The purchaser of one of these photographs may easily work it up from an original plate at the South Kensington or British Museum to a much closer image of the original, and such labour frequently repeated will be, though worthless as art, of great use to anyone who may care to understand Turner's method of work. In many cases, the marking out of the etched lines from the original in ink of the right colour will illuminate the whole photograph and make it of greater value.

As to what I have myself done in the way of notes, I was asked by the Autotype Company to write something on each plate, and I have done what I could. My object has solely been to tell the pleasurable thoughts and feelings these engravings have awakened in me, and the things I have seemed to see concerning their composition and sentiment during a companionship with them of many years. I have refrained from all critical blame, for criticism of that kind is useless, and Turner knew his difficulties and his failures better than anyone else; but we can never go very far wrong in saying clearly what we enjoy. If others then find delight in the same forms of beauty or are led to see those which ought to give delight, or indeed are at all brought, by the expression of the writer's rejoicing, into the temper of reverence and joy, good is done—and even if the things in which he finds pleasure are more fancifully than truly enjoyable, the harm is transient. There is nothing which those who

seek beauty, without vanity in their hearts, so easily discover to be fantastic as fantastic enjoyment. One kind of criticism is altogether vile: it is that which strives to find out mistakes for the sake of pluming itself on its own cleverness; and rather than fall into that, it is better not to get the habit of blame at all. I have preferred to look at what was beautiful when I was capable of seeing it, and to say how I saw it, and why I loved it.

STOPFORD A. BROOKE.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Photo-engravings by The Autotype Company.

No. I.

THE FRONTISPIECE.

Drawn, Etched, and the Centre engraved by J. M. W. TURNER.
Engraved by J. C. EASLING. Published May 23, 1812.

THE Frontispiece of the Liber Studiorum, presented by Turner to the subscribers when about a third of the book was finished, is composed of a central picture surrounded by a framework filled with various objects grouped fancifully together. The little picture in the midst was engraved by Turner himself. It represents the city of Tyre, standing high above the sea shore, and on the shore the maidens of Europa wail for her departure. She herself, seated on the bull, waves her farewell to them from the sunny sea.

The fantastic framework of the whole, wrought with decorative skill and composed with the extremest care, is suggestive of the subjects treated in the book. A scroll on which the names of the engravers are inscribed hangs near at hand from an upright mast. The spars and oars, set against a row of Norman arches, tell of the Marine and Architectural drawings. The water-lily, the

wild grasses and mosses speak of the Pastoral; the caduceus, the urn, the thyrsus of the Elegant Pastoral; and the picture of Tyre with the distant hills of the Historical and the Mountainous subjects. The white peacock, standing on the fragment of a classic temple in the forefront of the engraving, is the eye of the whole composition, and may possibly symbolize the pride of Tyre.

Our chief technical interest is in the engraving of the central picture, done by Turner's own hand. If his work was sensitive and delicate when he engraved on the large scale of a whole plate, it was much more so when he put this image of a great city, with the sunny sea and distant mountains, into this tiny space. So evanescent was the sky that a single printing altered it, and before long he was forced to re-mezzotint the whole. This he did again and again, and the engraving grew more and more substantial, until at last Tyre, originally bathed in dazzling light, and seen through the light like a visionary city, appears under a gloomy sky pierced only by a few rays of sunshine. These changes were made with wonderful skill, but the centre of the plate is always unsatisfactory except in the earliest states in which Turner's dream is still a dream.

This is the picture Turner placed at the beginning of his book, and I think with a deliberate meaning. He painted the passing away of Tyre, and symbolized it by the story of Europa; and in it he expressed all his own sorrow, both grim and pitiful, for the decay and death of

human work and glory and beauty. He had a special attraction towards great sea-empires, gathered perhaps from his silent love of England, and he illustrated their rise and fall in the two pictures—for which he seems to have had most personal love—the Rise, and the Fall of Carthage. Therefore, if he wished to represent in the most striking manner his sense of the sadness of humanity, he would choose to do it under the image of the fall of a Queen of the sea. Here he has chosen Tyre. The sun is not rising over her towers, but westering to its descent into the waves, and the hour of the afternoon is that hour when loveliness is greatest but is on the verge of decay. It is the same hour in the history of the great sea-city. The setting of her Empire is at hand, but her glory and her beauty seem as yet undiminished and superb. The whole scene laughs in light and joy. The clouds of the upper sky are disposed in oblique bars, and seem—so like painting is the laying of the mezzotint—to be tinged with Tyrian crimson. Low on the horizon they pass into vapour, penetrated with light; and the mountains underneath them, steeped in the radiance, look almost transparent. The sea glitters, and runs gaily into the bay the cliffs of which are wooded to their edge; and over the shallow beach, whose wet sand takes all reflections into its apparent depth, the waves, edged with white, spread in softly sweeping curves. On the cliffs, and lifted into the light in pride, the temples and palaces of Tyre arise, overlooking and commanding the sea; and her fortifications run down to the piers

where her merchant barks and battle-galleys lie at anchor. Turner has tossed their beaks into the air, and, as if he wished to bring pride and sorrow together, the uplifted arms of Europa and her companions repeat the tossing curves of the bows of the warships.

There is no gloom at first sight in this sun-lighted scene, but there is the threat of gloom. The very exquisiteness of the beauty suggests that it will pass away. The sun departs from the sky, and Europa—daughter and princess of Tyre, Spirit of her splendour and of her loveliness—is like the sun departing, borne to another land by the God. Empire, with her, is changing place from Asia to Europe, and the wailing of her maidens is prophetic of the overthrow of the city of the Sea. When pride and beauty are at their height, they are doomed. This is the symbolism of the plate Turner placed at the beginning of his book, and it strikes that note of sadness for the sorrow of the earth and the fates of men, to which as the predominant note of the Liber Studiorum Mr. Ruskin long since drew attention.

PART I.

ISSUED JANUARY 20, 1807.

No. II.

THE BRIDGE AND COWS.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

THIS drawing, treated with so much simplicity, is said to bear the traces of Gainsborough's influence. The natural landscape is certainly grouped in that painter's manner, but the human element is altogether Turner's own. Gainsborough often played with the peasant's life as a pretty subject, and his rustic children are always touched with sentiment and beauty. It was well to draw that side of the truth; and that he should feel it proves his easy, charming temper. But Turner, whose imagination was greater than Gainsborough's and who therefore felt more deeply, saw the sterner and the truer side of English peasant life. In that he scarcely ever felt the other side, he missed completeness of view, and the Liber Studiorum, when it treats of the country labourer, is too uniformly

bitter and ugly. There is neither grace nor charm in the poverty recorded in this drawing, and the only pity is in the sternness of the record. The mill is poor, the water of its stream is scanty, and the wheel is not going. It grinds the corn only of those whose heavy toil struggles to keep life going from day to day, and who will decay and end like the dead willow beneath the bank. The boys are sickly, stunted, idle; and without pleasure even in their play. It is the dull naked truth of country life in a district of heavy clay such as Turner drew again in the *Hedging and Ditching* of his book.

But where men and children do not grow well, trees flourish; and Turner's pleasure in the making of this drawing was in the grove and in the willows by the water. The bridge—supported by the unshaped stems of trees, and floored by rude planks the curves of which the artist has etched with great care—seems as if it had grown of its own impulse out of the wood behind it; and it may not be too fantastic to think that Turner wished us to feel that it was the work of Nature herself, and that the thick-foliaged grove to which it leads was a place where the old forest mystery could still be felt. This imaginative impression is deepened by the strong realism of the pollard willows that fringe the brook and are the outer wall and guard of the deep wood. They are nobly drawn. The vital switch and lissome leap of the branches of the living willow ought to be compared with the decaying trunk and the gnarled boughs of its dead companion. Both are contrasted with the most accurate truth to

nature, nor is their contrast without its pathetic analogy to vigorous manhood and sapless age. The etching of their leaves, as the etching of the whole plate, is done with the greatest affection, his hand dwelling on his work from point to point, as if he was delighted to tell the story of all he loved so much; and the slow stream as it winds under the bank among the reeds and round the stone, shows, as many another example proves, that nowhere is Turner's hand more delicate, nor his grace of thought more tender, than when he is at work on a dark pool like this where many reflections gather together to mingle and to commune like friends with one another. Opposite to this woodland and water so full of imagination, is the commonplace mass of trees on the rising hill by the roadside; but even these Turner pitied in their dulness, and therefore the cumulus above, in sympathy with them, repeats their outline. The rest of the sky is still and sleepy, the cloudy sky of an English afternoon in a damp country. There is no wind, nothing to stir the blood or lift the leaves.

The composition of the plate is interesting. A line taken from the head of the standing boy and brought down to the feet of the boy who sits on the ground will repeat the curve of the left bank; and another drawn along the backs of the cows will echo the line of the bridge, not exactly, but enough to illustrate one of Turner's constant habits in composition. Then again, the nearest upright of the bridge has its repetition in the beam which holds up the waste-trough of the mill, and

these two clasp together the distance and the foreground. Lastly, all the long, soft sweeping lines of the bridge and the cows are opposed by the short curve of the road which wheels sharply to the left; and every one of these curves is made more enjoyable, through contrast, by the vertical lines of the mill which is, though hidden away at the back of the drawing, the centre of the composition.

No. III.

THE WOMAN AND TAMBOURINE.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

THE WOMAN AND TAMBOURINE is one of the classical, or rather Claudesque landscapes, and a curious thing it is. The plate wins a great deal of charm from the finished engraving of Charles Turner, but though a pure and lovely piece of technical work, he reached a higher excellence afterwards when both he and Turner understood better the method of combining etching with mezzotint. The etching itself is, like that of the *Bridge and Goats*, too elaborate. A year later, and the fewest possible lines, only those needed to animate, enforce, and explain the mezzotint, would have been used; and it is worth while, in order to realize the difference, to contrast the etching of this plate with that of the *Inverary Pier*.

The landscape has not been seen as a whole before it was painted, but concocted—built up step by step out of

materials partly supplied by Claude and partly by Nature. It lacks, therefore, both vitality and unity. But the openness of atmosphere, and the sunlight so characteristic of Claude belong to it, and there are many things in it which, if they are somewhat weak, are also pretty. The rocky banks of the river and the buildings and trees above them are such as are often seen in Italy, but the two highest arches on the top of the wall are inserted by Turner with the intention of carrying our imagination through their openings into the air and plain beyond—a frequent trick of his. The stone-pines, tossed into the sky like plumes, have great grace, and Claude never mingled his goats and brushwood with more artificial charm than they are here mingled in the foreground. Bridge, rocks, castle and hill, the broken ground beyond the river bank, are fairly invented, but it is invention in the chains of the Italian classicism. Moreover, the drawing, like others of the same type in this book, is not kept within one manner. The road on which the distant figures stand, and the brake on their right, and the trees, are all English, not Italian. They are not classic, and they strike an alien note.

There is a dead calm in the pale sky, the calm of a warm southern day. The clouds are steeped in sunlight, the river glides along, the hills are dim in the haze of heat; the comfort of the sunshine falls like a blessing over all the land. Nature feels the welfare of the hour, and the goddesses beneath the trees are gay. This sentiment of the joy and well-being of the world in light and

warmth is felt by Turner, and it is in this alone that we touch his imagination.

He has deepened the calm by the common practice of doubling his objects. The goats are in pairs; two men stand on the bank; the foreground figures are echoed by the figures beyond. Many resting-places are also provided for the eye; and the sweeping slant of the great tree and of the road and the bank to the left is insisted on, even created to the eye, by the three sloping figures which are hauling at a rope under the pier of the bridge.

I suppose that Turner had some meaning in the figures of the foreground, but nothing can be odder than the group. Venus and Minerva are seated together, and Minerva is making Cupid dance to the timbrel of a Bacchante. The ægis of the goddess is flung against the bank; her puissant spear is over-crossed by a thyrsus. It is like a solemn piece of satire, and if Turner had any meaning in it, I scarcely think he had more than a general grim sense that Wisdom may be made by Love to play the fool.

No. IV.

FLINT CASTLE.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

FLINT CASTLE is a delightful picture, as fresh and bright as the sunny, breezy day it represents. A light brisk wind is blowing on shore, and ruffles the waves, and sends gay ripples in over the shallow sand. The clouds are full of movement and change, and their masses, stratified on the horizon and the zenith, are rolled upwards in the middle sky into great sunlit cumuli, bright as the head of Zeus. Their heavier congregation on the right, in front of which the dark vertical mast of the fishing-boat rises in order to vary their uniformity and to make them retreat to the eye, is yet thin enough to permit the rays of the sun to shine through it at intervals. Higher in the sky, these rays have completely conquered the obstruction of the cloud, and slant across the whole drawing in a blaze, enlarging and dignifying the composition. Opposed to these oblique lines, and leading us down to the

horizontal surface of the sea, are the straight, sunny bars of vapour over the horizon against which the walls and towers of the castle stand up proudly. The castle is lightly etched—nothing but the outline is given—and yet so admirably is it placed, and so forcibly is it relieved, that it dominates, and is the centre of the drawing. It seems to commune both with sea and sky, rooted in the one, rising into the other.

On the left, two ranges of low hills come down to the beach, and their waving ridges are continued, but in change, by the curved lines of the boats which are drawn up on the sands below the castle. This binding together, through continuity of line, of natural features in a landscape with objects of human labour is a common habit of Turner's, and the outcome of a constant principle in his mind. He felt silently that harmony of Nature and Man which Wordsworth put into verse.

The boats are drawn with the knowledge gained by the long observation of his youth. He has built them with anxiety for their battle with the sea. See how their bows are tossed to meet the waves and to lift over them, how broad their beam, how mightily hewn their ribs, and with what mingled force and grace their sails and masts spring into the air. Turner loved these hardy facers of the tempest, and drew them with the same affection that a lover paints his mistress. Lower down, in the foreground, there is another of these boats, done from point to point with equal power and love; and either to enhance our interest by more detail, or to

gain a greater mass of shadow, or because he loved that confusion of ropes and sails which is so pleasant to see, he places a smaller boat behind the larger one, and uses the darkness of its sharp projecting bowsprit and its fluked anchor-head to intensify the light on the horizon. All this is wrought with his best skill.

The two groups of men in the foreground are deliberately composed into forms which are of value to the whole subject, and treated as if they were integral parts of the landscape. The group with the cart and horse, set underneath the castle, lifts the castle into the air, and gives it distance and dignity by repeating its lines. The group on the shore serves as a resting-place for the sight, and between both groups which are like the sides of a gateway, the lines of the seashore seem to open out to meet the breadth of the sea. The boat-hook and the block which crosses it are so arranged as to induce the eye to do this work.

But the groups are not less full of that human interest so dear to Turner because they are thus treated. They fill the scene with life. There is as much activity upon the shore among the men as there is in the sky among the clouds. The smugglers discharge in haste their cargo; far off, the fisher-folk are watching the scene. There is none of the sadness which prevails so much in the Liber Studiorum. Turner loses it by the seaside; the fresh wind, the ships, the sailors, seem to make him happy, and we feel his pleasure in these things as we look at this drawing. It is admirable for its unity of impression.

Atmosphere, joyous light and wind, the sentiment of the sea-coast and its life, of the sea and its rough playmates —both ships and men—are nowhere else, in this book, better expressed by the artist.

No. V.

BASLE.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

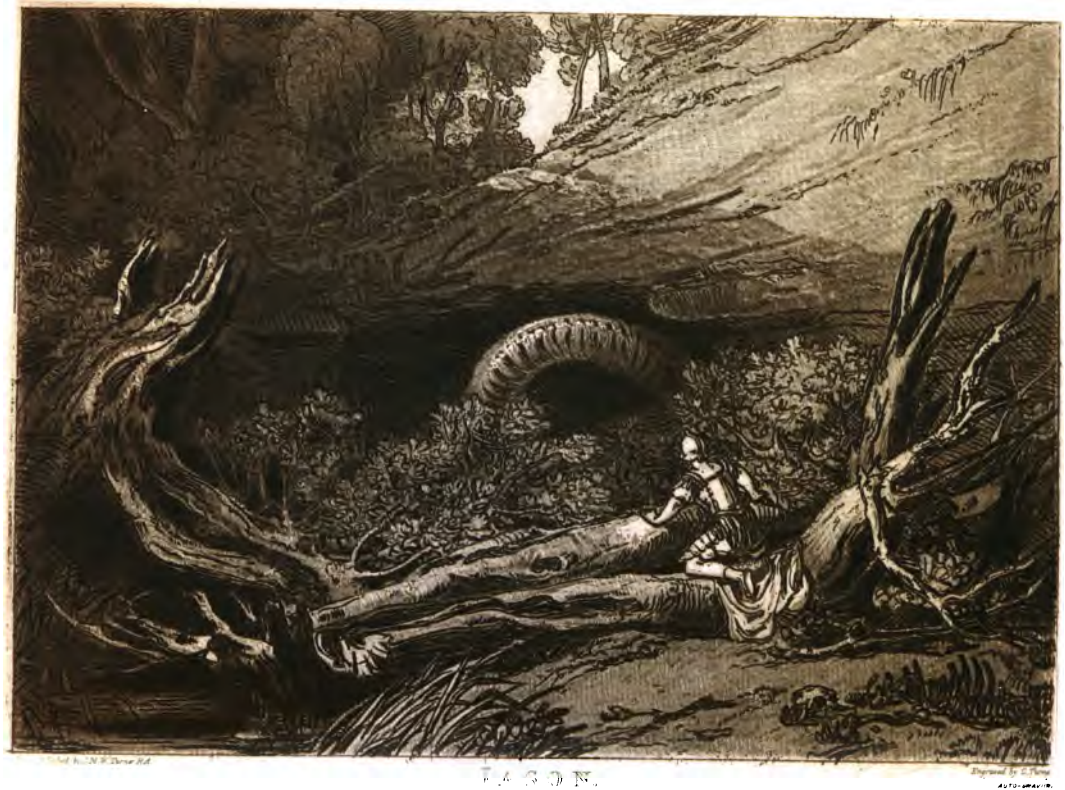
A GREAT deal of interest belongs to this plate as a record of Basle nearly seventy years ago. The "Hotel of the Three Kings" has replaced the houses on the right, and many a pitiful restoration has altered the appearance of the romantic and lofty houses which in the drawing rise like cliffs and climb the hill to the highest point where the terrace of the Minster overhangs the river. The Cathedral soars into the air to commerce with the skies, and Turner meant to emphasize its aspiration. But it has neither weight nor strength, and is so slurred over that it is difficult to identify it above the houses. It was not the religious history of the town that impressed Turner.

But he was interested in Basle as the old mediæval frontier town, one of the guards after 1501 of a small, poor, and free State. He has taken pains with the fortifications and gates; he has thought, as he drew, of its trade, and of the river as the defence and the

pathway of its trade. The chief objects in the drawing are the strong gate-tower, the custom-house opposite it, and the store-house where the boats drawn up in the side-canal are landing produce. Nearer at hand two huge granaries arise, and the river is alive with timber-rafts and barges. Yet much of the sentiment of the older time is also preserved, and the town has still the air of the place where Holbein and Erasmus lived. And the sky over it is in sympathy with a land where a severe life is ennobled by effort, and whose in-dwellers had, like this day with oppressive clouds, fought steadily for freedom. The sun, half hidden, shines out of banks of close vapour, and pours a warm and mellow light over the fields beyond the Æscher Thor where the battle of St. Jacob was fought, that battle where 1,600 Swiss contended with 16,000 French; and the wealth of rays shot from the under line of the clouds may be Turner's translation of his sympathy with the Thermopylæ of Switzerland.

The light is tender and clear, and steeps all the background in a shimmer of radiance which is the most beautiful thing in the engraving, and through which the banks of the river and the hills of the Black Forest softly shine. I cannot admire the sky; nor does Turner's Rhine even resemble the 'exulting and abounding' waters that rush with gladness through the town. Ordinarily Turner gives a great stream its full value; but I imagine he was so interested in the old houses and the story they told him that he forgot the majesty of the river, and saw it only as a road for merchandise. Nor is it possible that

at any time the bridge should have been so tumbledown a structure as Turner has made it. It looks as if it had but one railing which serves to do duty now for one side, now for another; and the horses that cross it are no less carelessly drawn. On the whole I do not think that Turner had much pleasure in this drawing; even the surface of the stream with its reflections, though skilfully studied, is wholly inferior to that of the other rivers in the Liber Studiorum.



Drawn by J. M. W. Turner R.A.

Engraved by C. Turner

JASON.

Lat. 50. 12. 0. Longitude by J. M. W. Turner. Harley Street.

AUTO-GRAVIR.

No. VI.

JASON.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

THE picture from which this plate of *Jason* is taken is in the National Gallery, but the print is more carefully composed, more imaginative, and more finished than the picture. The composition is full of repetitions that, by insistance on a certain symmetry, knit it together. The broken trunk in the pool with its extended arms, and the curves of the iron reeds, repeat the lines of the two main tree stems and of Jason's figure. The riven bough, the end of which has fallen to the ground, is a repetition of the heavy tumbled branches on the left above the pool. These, with others easily discovered, are the powers which unite the several parts of the drawing into a whole; that is, so far as the mere arrangement of lines is concerned. The real unity, the living whole of the composition, is made by the imaginative conception of the subject.

The etching is carried further than usual, and every line is masterly. Its manner changes with the thing represented, and with the passion of the artist. The engraving is worthy of the etching, and Turner must have watched, and touched on it, day by day. There is not a quarter of an inch of the tree trunk on which Jason's hand is laid which is not full of interest. Lichen, and weather stains, and moss, and hollows where the fibres of the wood have decayed, are one and all wrought with close intention and affection. The rock-face of Yorkshire sandstone is done with equal care, and it is a wonder to see how the shadows of the trees inform us, by the variations of their direction, of every breakage, cleavage, and change of the surface of the rock.

There is nothing Greek in the conception of the subject. Turner has conceived the old story with his usual *naïveté*. He knew from Ovid that the monster was asleep, and Jason therefore approaches the dreadful pit without any precaution. He moves daintily: he has disposed his garment most beautifully on the fallen trunk, and he does not care at all that he is half entangled in the trees; but were the dragon suddenly to flash forth his fiery head and rattling rings, Jason could not defend himself for a moment. But though there is nothing Greek—save, perhaps, the childlike directness of the thought—in Turner's treatment of the legend, yet it is not made modern. The Teutonic element in Turner—unknown to himself—has moved in his mind. The drawing might be the representation

of a subject taken from a Norse Saga, and placed in the midst of English scenery. The cavern is such as we find described in the story of Sigurd or Beowulf; and the dragon is a great worm like Fafnir, guarding a treasure in this hollow of the earth. It is not a true serpent that Turner means to draw, but the Fire-Drake that, serpent in body, has the head, claws, and the teeth of the northern dragon. No serpent would leave the skeleton we see in the foreground, but this monster has torn all the flesh from the white bones of his victim.

Nor is it apart from the sentiment of a Saga that the scenery is English. For it is England of the ancient settlement, when all beyond the village and the town was 'forest,' that Turner has here represented. Outside of the clearing, at that time, moor and wood and broken ground were always haunted by the fierce creatures of the imagination; and there is the true terror of the peasant's superstition in the dragon jaws that Turner has given to the heads of the withered trees. Even Sigurd or Jason, as they drew near the den, might have seen a dragon in every twisted bough.

There is no solitude deeper in the Liber Studiorum than that which we feel here. Only one touch shows that man has ever been in this place, and I am not sure that Turner inserted it with intention. The end of the trunk of the tree on which Jason kneels has been lopped smooth or sawn away. It may be that Turner only put in this sharp downward semicircle to contrast with the upward sweep of the dragon's coil, and to oppose a

clear-cut arc to the wild extravagance of the boughs and stems; and it certainly makes all the natural forms more interesting, and standing alone among them gives them greater value. But Turner whose imagination is rarely careless, may have intended more by this than a mere fulfilment of the law of contrast. This piece of human work tells the questioning imagination how long the place has been dwelt in by the dragon. Since men hewed down the tree, the frost and rain of years have worn and split the smooth-sawn surface. Since then the broken tree trunks that have fallen into the pool have pushed forth a rough growth like a hedge all along their ridges. Its thick and tangled branches are full of life and boldness, and the way in which, coiled like knots of cord, they twist forth from the trunks, is a marvel of accurate representation. In this manner Turner has fixed the length of time; but there is a point, unless the dragon be winged, where his imagination has been neglectful. One asks,—Where is the dragon's path when he comes forth from the cave?—where the crushed branches?—where the slot of Fafnir?

The deadly pool, with its fierce etching hewn as if with passion into the copper, increases the weird impression; yet Turner, with his love of a little peace—of Nature's secret quiet in the midst of her most wicked desolation—drops into the pool one of the lilies that grow in the moat of Raglan unhaunted there by dragon and untouched there by decay.

Pale, quiet, undisturbed by all of earth, through the

break in the pretty copsewood which Turner loved to etch, the sky looks in upon the savage horror down below. Neither the wrath and woe of the dragon, nor the victory of the hero, win the sympathy of Nature.

PART II.

ISSUED FEBRUARY 20, 1808.

No. VII.

THE STRAW YARD.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

THIS plate was famous among the engravers for the effect produced within so short a scale of light and dark; the deepest dark, inside the doorway, being very light; and fine impressions of it from this point of view are of great value.

The subject, of course, is not especially interesting to those who seek the heroic in the Liber Studiorum, or Nature represented in her beauty or power; but it has its own charm, and there is more of the true Turner and of what he loved than there is in subjects which seem more interesting, like that for example of the *Bridge and Goats*. At least, this is English, and Turner loved his land though often his love was sorrow. And it is peasant life, and though he saw that life as it is, and

made it coarse and rude, yet he pitied the difficult labour of the poor, and his soft feeling always rises through his work upon it, and touches us with tenderness. The figure of the labourer on the ladder, bent with years of toil and sickness, and the two figures at the gate—addicti glebæ—clenched to the soil—how close they are to the stern reality! The horses are as sad and weary and rude as the men, wrought to skin and bone by bitter labour. Nothing is neglected to deepen the impression. The discarded plough and harrow and the milking stool, all reflected in the sulky pool, tell us, by their neglect, that it is autumn time. It is against winter that the men are stacking the straw, and the afternoon shows one of those bright October skies which are full of cold clear light. This sky is one of the most beautiful in the Liber Studiorum, more choicely engraved than that of *Flint Castle*, but of the same quality of light and air, and full of the fancy and change of nature—through all its intricate passages of change studied with the greatest care, and true through every difficulty. There is calm in the air at present; nothing can be quieter than the low cloud-barred horizon that opens on the left, but on the right, above the trees, wind is at hand. The clouds there are tossed and intertwined by the yet unborn spirit of the breeze within them. It is a rare moment for a painter to seize, and as difficult to represent. But with what ease, with what mastery the work is done!

The trees which rise into the sky above the barn are grouped with the beauty which Turner took care to give

to Nature whenever he had to represent poor and outworn Humanity. Their outline is lovely, and they are etched with exquisite lightness and power. They overshadow and ennoble the barn whose open door with its two edges of bright light would fill a boy's heart with longing to penetrate its darkness. Nor are the pollard willows unworthy of Turner's hand. Their stems, their long switch-like branches, the upward toss of their graceful leaves, etched deeply, but preserving their sword-like lightness, are well contrasted with the two birches that hang their sere and pensive foliage over the rough labourers below whom they seem to compassionate but not to love. As studiously careful is the composition of the horses and the cart. This is a pyramidal composition bounded by three curving lines. The apex is the man upon the ladder; the hooves of the horse make the point at the left-hand angle, and the point on the right is the end of the shadow thrown by the white horse. The whole is bound together by the heap of straw in the midst, where one truss, like the ornament at the angle of the base of a column, is laid at right angles to two that cross it. Within this triangle, there is an involved composition of the horses, the hurdles, the cart, its wheel, the ladder, and the figure carrying the straw, which is full of interest and pleasure. On the whole, though many do not care for this print, it is as well worth careful study—within its range—as any in the book. We may well give it some trouble, for Turner has given to it a world of anxiety.

No. VIII.

CASTLE ABOVE THE MEADOWS;

OR,

OAKHAMPTON CASTLE.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

THE CASTLE ABOVE THE MEADOWS is a pretty plate, gracious and cheerful, and the herd-boy who pipes on the grass, so much for his own pleasure and absorbed in his music, gives the keynote to the warm and happy place, and tells us of what Turner felt. It is so rare to find him gay and good-humoured in the Liber Studiorum, so rare to find him dwelling on the joy rather than on the sorrow of men, that the subject is more interesting from this point of view than it is in itself. For otherwise there is not much in it, nor is it so well conceived or drawn, or so penetrative of the heart of Nature as we should expect. It is chiefly out of the depths of his sympathy for man that Turner's imaginative treatment of Nature arises; and he pierces most deeply into her

truth when his soul is full of the tragedy of mankind. At least, this is true of him after and during the years in which he wrought at this book.

There are many drawings of his earlier years when he is lost in the joy of the quiet hills and water-dells; and he is nearer then to the lonely passion of Wordsworth for the spiritual life of Nature than any other soul has ever been. But this exquisite time, when his was the silence and rapture of the lovely world, was brief; and of that Joy "whose hand is ever on his lips, bidding adieu." When afterwards, as in this subject, his heart was light, there was but little depth in his work; phantasy was there rather than imagination, prettiness rather than power; and he seems to lose the certain instinct of his hand. The trees in this drawing appear to be pollarded elms and are, with the exception of the two graceful creations beyond the stile, ill drawn in comparison with his usual work, and they certainly want imagination. They are best done in those parts where they are ugliest, where the pollarding of past years has forced them into strange modes of growth.

The prettiest thing in the drawing is the soft gliding of the hills and their woods into the water meadows, and the unfrequented road where the cows lie without fear of disturbance. All the winding of the road, the house, the line of wood beyond, are charmingly composed together; and the trees on the horizon that toss their heads like plumes give grace and lightness to the distance, and suggest the evening wind.

The Castle is of course the central thought, but Turner has not, I think, loved it. He lifts it high, it is true, against the sky, but around it gathers no sentiment, save perhaps in the apparent sympathy of its towers with the rock on which they are built, itself wrought into forms—as if it were basalt—which resemble ruined towers. The sky however is beautiful, full of flaked cirri continuously yet variously disposed and lit underneath with the light of the sun which has dipped towards its setting behind the western hill.

The shadow of the hill and trees has begun to slope towards the plain; the cattle are half at rest; the sunlight streams, like an evening traveller, through the stile which leads into the secret of the wood; and the boy, whose face is lit with light as with pleasure, pipes the farewell of the warm evening to the happy earth.

No. IX.

MOUNT ST. GOTHARD.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

THE sky of this impressive plate was spoilt by the rottenness of the copper. It will be seen from the remarks I quote in the Appendix that Turner took a great deal of pains to get as good a result as he could out of the defective material. Nevertheless the sky remains lifeless, and it is difficult to tell from the engraving whether the white forms upon the distant peaks are snow or cloud. They seem to be clouds and have their character, but we know that he intended the mountains to be covered with snow. The fact is that the state of the copper forced him to replace what was originally snow by white shifting clouds which are blown away by the wind and pass into pale and paler vapour, till their whiteness is lost in the general colour of the sky.

The power and majesty of the drawing is concentrated round the road. It is the difficult triumph of human energy over the terrible forces of Nature that Turner

paints, and with which he sympathizes while he paints. The most magnificent Swiss drawing of rock and gorge which I have ever seen—a drawing at Farnley of this very pass—where the road runs under overhanging rocks and is supported by arches over a stupendous precipice, is dedicated to this thought. In the drawing before us now, the treatment of the same sentiment is quieter and more dignified, and the portion of the pass chosen for illustration is not among its upper and fiercer ranges. But not less deep than in the Farnley *St. Gothard* is the impression we here receive of slow, firm human labour overcoming the mute resistance of the mountains. Turner has wrought with his utmost strength the dark gallery driven through the precipice. With equal strength he has built up the side of the precipice which climbs from the hollow, until it seems to be a buttress made by human hands to support the mountain. He has laid down the road upon the solid rock with touches as solid as the rock; and finally etched the low broad wall and parapet with lines deeper and more rigidly cut than any used upon the rocks, as if he would insist on the worth of the work of man! The steady and patient march of the laden mule, bending to his work, is a symbol of the labour that built the road, and daily uses it.

But Turner tells still more. He tells, to enhance the wonder of the road, the dangers to which it is subject. Down that rushing precipice above fall the winter avalanches, and where they pass over the slope of the rock,

not a lichen has grown. Water, lying in the crevices, has eaten into the stone, and freezing, has split it along the lines of cleavage. Lower down, it has riven away a great mass which has fallen beside the path. Nearer at hand, another form of water destruction is at work. A small stream, from a source above, has worn its way over and into the rock. We see the result of its labour below in the tumble of stones. Tiny as its cascade is now, in spring it desolates the path. The history then of the work of water, running and frozen, which this little corner of the drawing tells us is an abstract of Alpine disintegration.

I wish I could adequately tell how it is that Turner makes the masses of rock and the faces of precipice in his mountain drawings seem so gigantic. No other artist approaches him in this matter. It is not that they succeed ill. They do not succeed at all. It is not that he succeeds well; it is that he succeeds superbly. The "eye-baffling" precipice in the drawing at Farnley is not eye-baffling to Turner; he draws it as large as he saw it. The slope of cliff here, through whose body the gallery is hewn, seems as vast as the actual rock itself. Look at the great outlying mountain buttress on the right, opposite the parapet! It looks enormous, and yet this impression is given within six inches of the drawing. "Insupportably advancing"—it is this word of Coleridge which describes it best as it seems to press forwards, with its head like an elephant, into the space above the valley.

The same things are true of his smaller masses of rock. His boulders look their size; here above the path is one, detached, as huge as those in the *Source of the Arveron* and in the *Ben Arthur*. How is it done? It is easy to say generally that it is the work of a hand trained to express, through years of exercise, the most subtle distinctions of form; that it is the result of an immense knowledge gained by years of observation and recording of the doings of nature, so that his pencil when it moved, moved as if he himself were Nature. But more particularly, he gains these massive effects, first, by the infinite change and variety in his outline of a precipice or the edge of a rock—the main curve or fall of the line altering at every tenth of an inch its sweep—so that the eye, unconsciously arrested at every point, never seems to come to the end. The vast rock outlines have this subtlety and variety, but it needs a hand almost as subtle and various as Nature's own to render them.

Secondly, this change and subtlety must be expressed within the great lines of stratification, cleavage, or fracture which belong to each kind of rock, and the artist must feel these main lines and never be false to them, no not even in the stones which fall from the rocks on the roadside. And Turner saw and drew rightly these lines, though he knew nothing about them scientifically—in fact drew them all the better because he was not confused by any geological knowledge. And the lines by which he marked the character of the rocks were as few in broad drawings like this, as they were multitudinous

and careful in an elaborate drawing like *Loch Coriskin.* It is then this absolute truth to the figure of the rocks as influenced by their atomic arrangement which makes our sight impute to them in his drawings their hugeness of height and breadth.

Thirdly; in Nature there is not an inch of the surface of a great fall of cliff, of a boulder, or a stone, which is at any point the same. The whole expanse is covered with crevices, rounded bosses, angles, and depressions, lichens and vegetation, water mouldings, and water channels—with the results of Nature's work, anger, and caprice for many years—and every variation produces a change of light or a gradation of shadow. So far as an artist renders this infinite variety of surface and tells its story accurately, detaining the eye a thousand times with new matter as it wanders over the cliff or the stone—so far does he give the true impression of vastness or force which the eye receives from the actual surface of the rocks. And Turner is a pre-eminent master of this. The boulders in the *Source of the Arveron* are worked with gradations of tint changing within the one-hundredth part of an inch, and the sloping face of cliff in this plate is varied in the same way with infinite subtlety and knowledge. The looker-on feels its moulding as if with his hand, and if he knows rocks he can ask questions from the drawing as from the rock itself and answer them with the same pleasure. His attention is detained, and the result is, he sees the surface here, which is only a few inches across, as if it were as wide as the rock itself.

But the interest in this engraving does not end with the discussion of this question. The great cliff on the right is made to seem more huge by the meadowland that spreads over its end, and on the very edge of it Turner's eye has been caught by the strangeness of three or four *blocs perchés*, and used them with an artist's intention to enliven the curved brow of the promontory. The bold setting of this promontory over against the cliff which descends from the gallery, and the bracing of the two together by the parapet, sends the eye downward to the profound depth of the valley; and it is a proof of what a great artist can do by small means that Turner, with half-a-dozen etched lines, has made us understand the course of the river that runs down the valley, and the amount of its slope.

Far away in the distance, the mists rise and fall, the heights are piled huger and huger, one over the other, till at last from their mighty shoulders the sharp-toothed peaks of the crystalline rocks leap up like flames of fire. But whatever the might and the multitudinousness of Nature may be—the last and the first thing which claims the mind is the slow-wrought path winding with pain and victory among the mountains.

No. X.

SHIPS IN A BREEZE.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

THIS drawing, usually called the Egremont Sea Piece, is with its companion—the Leader Sea Piece—a study of shipping in windy weather. It is the kind of weather in which Turner reached all the gaiety of which his silent, steady nature was capable—a seaman's gaiety, like the rough fresh breeze which tosses here the waves and rolls the clouds along. It was a gaiety he did not show, but nature felt it for him, and on such a day the salt spray and the rushing wind and the bursts of sunshine and rain made him feel happy.

The higher sky is clear and the half-gale continuously brings up across it dark and heavy clouds, each pouring forth their rain. As they pass away, the sun from above illuminates their upper folds. The moment chosen here is the interval between the retreat of one of these masses of vapour and the approach of another. Rain is falling to the right and left, but not in the centre.

In contrast with this swift movement and life, this variety of gloom and light, is the quiet space of lofty air upon the right, and the motionless cirrus clouds that float in its sunshine. The same opposition of movement and rest is made by the ships which whirl swiftly in curves around the steady, horizontal man of war at anchor. In order to animate the sky still more and to fill the mind with the impression of the breeze, Turner has put in the gulls which are tacking against the wind, and the pennant and flags which struggle with it to escape and are themselves like flying birds. The oblique lines of shadow which cross the sky at right angles to the masts of the sailing merchantmen make the curves of the clouds seem more beautiful, and seem to double the speed of the ships.

To get distance, the sea is separated into three spaces on the left, the middle one of which is flooded with sunlight, and the same effect is produced on the right hand by the shadows which divide the sea into five spaces and force the eye to travel over them one by one.

The ship anchored in the midst is riding head to the wind, the force of which is indicated by the way she sinks downward at the bow, pulling at the cable. The wind is strong, therefore, but it is blowing off shore. Hence the waves have no run in them and no massiveness, and are broken up into white water. They lift only against the pier with the general agitation of the whole sea, and the interest of their drawing consists in the representation of the clashing of this apparently double movement, the

movement towards, and the movement away from, the land. Three of the ships are sailing free with the wind on their quarter. The fourth has just luffed up head to wind in the process of tacking, and her sails are flattened against the masts. The life, the speed of these merchant barks, their ease and freedom on the sea, their mastery over the waters are all delightful. We feel the pleasure Turner had in the vigorous sea-life of England; in the sturdy companionship with winds and waves of the old tars we see upon the pier; in the stir of her commerce, using with joy the ocean for its work under the protection of her navy. If the pennant tell true, the ship at anchor is an old man of war now on guard, and round it, as if claiming their right to its defence before they go on voyage, sweep the trading ships in salutation.

No. XI.

HOLY ISLAND CATHEDRAL.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

THIS engraving is, as nearly as possible to an imaginative artist, a purely architectural treatment of the subject. Turner, in the "England and Wales," has painted Holy Island as seen from the sea. There, the cathedral is set on high above the basaltic rocks, and stands forth against the roar of the storm like a prophet against the armies of the Kingdom of Evil. Nor is it at all improbable that Turner had this thought in his mind. It belongs to the story of the Island. Cuthbert in his cell, praying through the tempest, heard at night the shrieks of the demons in the fierce gusts; and those who built this later temple did not lose the wild tradition. Nor was Turner less faithful to the natural spirit of the place. The northern coast, the tempestuous sea, the lonely rock, the sands, the stern life of the seamen, the wreckage of the coast, the rude play of women and children with waves and wind, the incessant fierceness of Nature and

her wild work of years on the cathedral, are all expressed in the "England and Wales" drawing.

In our engraving there is nothing of this. This is a study of arches and worn stone; and it was difficult to make it ideally interesting. But Turner has done his best to give himself and us a fine pleasure by his accurate and imaginative etching of the stones. There is no slovenliness, or trying to produce picturesque effect by meaningless dots and shadows and vegetation. Whatever pleasure is arrived at has its foundation in truth and in the charm that arises out of the clean clear drawing of things as they are. The axe-hewn massiveness of Norman work, and its close-fitting grasp of stone to stone, are here before our eyes. It seems as if the building was not made, but had grown like an oak by its own vitality. There are no ruled lines, no mere draughtsman's mechanical work. Every touch moves instinct with the artist's feeling of the life of the stone itself, of the way in which the mason hewed it, of the work which Nature has done upon it. Twice he has expressed—where the arches have sunk in the upper row—the tremendous strength of the resistance the noble masonry offers to decay. And all over the walls, by the most skilful mezzotinting—watched as it was day by day by Turner—the surface structure of the stone is narrated to us; and the story varies from point to point. The interest is made, then, by the telling of truth. Additional interest is supplied, first by the sky spaces seen beyond the upper windows; then by the falling lights

and by the gradations of shadow which rise to the central light; then by the clever disposition of the pillars, varied like a grove of trees, but each in its place; then by the wild curves and luxuriant vegetation of the foreground—its natural and unpremeditated growth being set in contrast to the studied and rigid lines of the architecture; and, lastly, by the way—in strict accordance probably with the actual impression it produces—in which the central pillar is made chief of the others, like the leader of a host. It is in reality on a line with the pillars on each side of it. But owing to its lower descent into the ground, to the broken arch above its capital which pushes forward like a horn and challenges the eye, to the disposition of light upon it and especially on its capital, and to its elaborate carving, it seems to come onward beyond the rest, and the others to recede from it at an angle. Moreover, being thus made the centre of the composition, Turner, to give it importance, has made a great foundation for it, setting it on a little mound of its own, and surrounding its base with wild grass and weeds the great leaves of which curving away on either side of it support and dignify it. By these things the plate is made delightful; and it is worth while perhaps to say that Turner, not being able to amuse himself as usual with the sky, has taken special pleasure and pains with the broken ground and stones, and made every inch of them interesting, even to the smooth floor in the distance which in contrast with the rough foreground gives to the eye the pleasure of repose.

Lastly, Turner wished to tell something of what lay outside this narrow space, and we are made conscious of the tall unseen towers of the ruin by the shadow of one of them falling across the arches, and of the nearness of the sea and of the human life that belongs to it by the fisherman who passes across the aisles with his creel.

PART III.

ISSUED JUNE 10, 1808.

No. XII.

PEMBURY MILL, KENT.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

THIS Pastoral at least, among many that record the squalid misery of the peasant, is not hideous or wretched. Storm does not brood or thunder over it; all around it flows the warm summer sunshine. The labourers are not starved and sickly, but sturdy English workers. The dog is the only ugly thing in the drawing, but the pigeons—midst of all the corn—are well fed and happy, and the great burdock leaves grow in the wash of the water-wheel as if they had the secret of perfect health. The white flour falls in a stream through the sunshine into the sack, and the vine twines lovingly its tendrils round the door and beneath the thatch. It is the idyll of the fruits of the earth—"With corn and wine have I sustained thee." And the giving of God is filled up by the labour of men.

Unlike the miserable picture of the *Water Mill* starving for want of work, this happy mill has wrought all day and is working still. The cart is half filled with its produce.

Moreover, the place is old, and has its own long-developed character. All things we see have been wrought upon by time and by the elements, but they are in working order; they have none of the feebleness, while they have all the charm of age.

The large-leaved plant has been growing for many years; the old window-frame now filled with bricks, the rude cross-beams nailed across the gaping wall, were there, and were old, before the dovecote with its gay inhabitants was fastened to them. The vine has been planted by the grandfather of the miller, and a hundred tales belong to it. The place is aware of itself and of the manifold human lives that have grown into it. There is, too, a special individuality which belongs to buildings which use water and wind for their work, and Turner has felt and seized that here. Therefore, with the old age there is quiet, and brightness, and distinction. And the indwellers of the place are at one with its sentiment. The dog, the doves, find life pleasant in this retired woodland spot, lulled always with the rush and murmur and tinkling of water, with the rustling of the grove without, and the humming of the millstones. The human beings also are not apart from its soft quiet. For though their limbs are bent with toil, that is no over-sad or weary face which looks away over the sack's mouth and running meal into the warm afternoon; and though not many

thoughts of sentiment may come to these honest labourers, for daily work fills the soul, yet the place thinks and feels for them, and their lives are formed by its quiet spirit. That is the meaning of Turner's sunlight. Whatever the stillness may be in their hearts—the stillness of feeling or only of monotony—over the whole scene pours the sunshine, adorning all things, birds and plants, wheel and water, with its unpurchased gold, warming all things with its glowing life. In the universal brightness even the darkness of the place seems for the time only a deeply shadowed light.

As to the drawing itself, it is not so full of technical interest, either in work or composition, as many others. The wheel and the large leaved plants, the pigeons and vine, are perhaps over-sparkled with lights. But the sentiment of the drawing is its charm. The overshadowing grove without folds the mill in its embrace, and shuts up in peace this little nest from the noise of the great world. It is always at home, and has its own sweet content with its own labours and its own pleasures. And the sunlight comes, softly winnowed through the foliage of the grove, and pours through the open door with tender warmth and blessing. The cloud of floating meal takes up its glimmer and bears it into every recess of the mill, touching wheel and wall and floor and the sacks all in a row, with its grace and praise. It shines upon the heart of the place where all the work is done; and its brightest ray strikes full on the miller whose quiet toil from day to day has made this little kingdom into Home.

No. XIII.

BRIDGE IN MIDDLE DISTANCE;

OR,

THE SUN BETWEEN TREES.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

THE BRIDGE IN MIDDLE DISTANCE is one of those classical landscapes which Turner called *Elegant Pastoral.* Into it, as into all the other classical pastorals, his naturalism intrudes; and that unity of sentiment so necessary in an artificial composition is destroyed. When Turner is talking this double tongue he does not care so much as usual for truth to nature, and he draws things which are nondescript. Here for instance, it is impossible even to guess of what kind some of the trees are intended to be. Some of them seem Southern, others Northern. The landscape itself is half Italian and half English. The plain and the distant mountains look like a remembrance of the Campagna. The river is like an English river, like the winding of the Severn; but the

bridge resembles one of those massive, broad-roaded, low-parapeted bridges—see how Turner has insisted on its breadth!—which cross the valleys of the Riviera. The foreground on the right with its low walls and bushes has come from Italy, but the rise of the road to the left with its copsewood and trees is entirely English; and in the midst of all this he throws down three Claudesque rather than classical figures, full of a quaint unreality which entertains rather than displeases. The whole thing is unsatisfactory.

The sky however is nobly and quietly composed, though the sun, placed in the very midst blazing and overwhelming, rendered it extraordinarily difficult to represent it with beauty and variety. The transparent horizontal lines of cloud below the sun repeat and carry on the horizontal lines of the plain, and increase the impression of its expanse; while the faint lovely cirrus clouds above which are sloping away to the left give depth and atmosphere to the sky. They descend to meet the only cumulus in the heaven, far down above the trees on the left. By a common artifice of Turner's, this cumulus, repeating the outline of the trees, lifts them into the air, and assists the mind in its effort to give dignity to this part of the composition. The beautiful outline of the larger trees in the midst, set on high in dark and light against this pale and glowing sky, is the finest and most daring piece of imagination in the plate. The rest is somewhat commonplace, especially the support of the bridge at either end by massed foliage, but the whole is reposeful and fills the

imagination with the rest and comfort of a warm summer afternoon.

The sky is in aquatint, and exquisitely engraved by C. Turner, and the engraving of the river and of the sun-lighted foreground where the figures are sitting is full of delicacy and feeling.

No. XIV.

DUNSTANBOROUGH CASTLE.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

DUNSTANBOROUGH CASTLE, since its siege by Lord Hastings after the battle of Hexham when it was battered down in three days, has remained a ruin; and the ruin seems all the more desolate because of its savage and lonely site. The rocks of the promontory on which it stands are black and iron basalt, as grim as the nature of the north-east wind that continually beats upon them. The sea is as merciless as the wind, and its driven spray year by year consumes the masonry. Yet the Castle remains, pathetic in its patience, enduring the wild weather. Turner felt with it as with a living thing; and in what ways he felt with it he has told us twice, once in the "England and Wales" series, and again in this Engraving. In the first of these we stand upon the shore, south of the little creek into which the sea runs in the Liber Studiorum print; and over an intervening ledge of rocks we see the roof only of the cottage of which here

we see the whole. Beyond, the ruined towers stand up against a disturbed sky clearing after heavy rain and storm. The castle does not occupy all our interest, for Turner has filled the foreground with a crowd of sailors and country folk, of boys and weeping women employed around the wreck of a fishing smack which the gale has broken and cast upon the shore. The sea is still rough, though the wind has fallen; and the whole drawing is dedicated to the representation of the dangers of the wild coast and the labour of seamen and their wives, more than to the sorrow of the ruin.

But here, Turner has made the castle the chief interest. He felt, as he saw it this day, that it had lain so long uninhabited by man that it had become at one with the being of the basaltic rocks on which it stands; solid stone like them; a part of that Nature which lives for itself and not for man. Therefore he gives it no human sympathy; it is not tenderly lit, as *Norham* and *Raglan* are, by the soft sunset lights. It receives what the rocks and sea receive, and no more; and they and it are flooded with the morning light of a sky purified into calm after a night of storm. In all the Liber Studiorum there is not a more unconscious, pure, and quiet heaven. The wind has ceased its turmoil, the resting sheep add to the sense of morning peace and clearness, and the castle no more remembers its past wars than the rocks recollect the gale of yesterday.

But Turner could rarely hold himself free from humanity, and though there is no human sentiment gathered

round the ruins, we find his sorrowful witness to the battle of man with the winds and waves in the gaunt ribs of the ship, shattered like the castle; and in the wretched cottage sheltering beneath the cliff, the gable of which, to mark his sympathy with its pathetic poverty, he has touched with the rays of the morning sun.

The drawing of the rocks is masterly, and it is worth while to observe how the lit corner of the cottage lifts the castle gateway into the air by leading the eye upwards, and how the three sheep standing on the rocks and the three above them on the slope are so disposed as to perform the same office, and to repeat the arrangement of the two towers and of the wall between. Were the sheep removed, half the majesty and height of the gateway would be lost.

Still as the sea seems without, it is so lifted by the tide and so broken among the rough spurs of basalt that it runs almost in waves into the long narrow gully under the cottage; and it is with curious skill that Turner—when he has made this inwashing wave climb over the ledge of rock—draws the curving oval sweeps of the shallow and calmer water that spreads to the right and left. It is a piece of accurate truth to Nature.

No. XV.

LAKE OF THUN.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

"TURNER rarely painted on the spot," says Mr. Ruskin; "he looked, gathered, considered; then painted the sum of what he had gained, up to the point necessary for due note of it, much more of the impression, since that would pass, than of the scene, which would remain.

"The Niesen and Stockhorn might be completely drawn at any time; but his vision of them amidst their thunder-clouds, and his impression of the stormy lake, with the busy people on its shore, careless of storm or calm, was to be kept. And kept it was, to his latest day, realized first completely in the *Lake of Thun* of the Liber Studiorum."

The "vision of them amidst their thunder-clouds" exactly expresses the sentiment and the life of this drawing. The Niesen is lord of the Lake of Thun, and wherever the traveller wanders on its shores, he feels that mountain's monarchy. Turner has drawn with great

nobleness and majesty its massive slopes and upper precipices, and, to dignify it still more, has set its horn against the heart of the thunderbolt. The Stockhorn, too, has its own lightnings, but they fall upon it,—they are not at home with it. It is from behind the Niesen that the flood of fire pours forth which crosses the whole range of peaks. They have been in darkness, and the moment in which they are suddenly revealed by the flash is the moment that Turner has chosen to paint. Nothing could be more difficult to render. For the mountains, being plunged in vapour, would only appear faintly, though sharply outlined, in the flash; and it would be only owing to the extreme vividness of the light that their snows would be distinguished from their rocks. The delicate differences of mezzotint brought close to pure white by which this work was done lasted only through a few impressions; and the lower sky and the distant mountain range had to be reorganized almost immediately. It is only in early states that the flash traverses the whole plate from side to side, or that the mountains are seen faint through a film of vapour. Then again, the middle range of cloud, which is illuminated by the lightning which strikes downwards in the midst of the drawing, was the moment before as dark as the highest range of cloud, and had to be most delicately gradated from the brightness of the flash to the darkness on its right and left, in order to express this momentary illumination. On the endurance then, of this delicate work the unity of the impression made by the sky de-

pended; and it perished rapidly. It is no wonder that Turner was soon discontented. Only a few impressions exist which record satisfactorily his effort to represent the instantaneous lighting up of a dark sky by two flashes of fire of different intensity.

It is the lightning, we must remember, by which we see the whole. It is the lightning which reveals that the clouds are not all of a uniform darkness. The birds, the edge of the sail, by whose gleams of light the aërial distance of the lake and hill is made, are struck forth by the lightning. It is by it also that the waves are flashed out into a light far more fierce and dramatic in its contrast with the darkness of the lake and shore than sunlight would produce. It is a sensational effect of Nature, and the short and broken waves—illuminated in points and darts and in strange places by the two simultaneous flashes—are admirably true to those produced in a lake by a sudden squall of wind. But the tale of this storm is not yet completed. If I am right in my conjecture, Turner saw, at this moment which he chose to record, the rare phenomenon of "arborescent lightning." At the head of the lake the lightning ascends from the ground, flashing upwards right and left, and illuminating the slope. In the tropics this effect of lightning takes frequently the shape of a tree with naked branches, and hence derives its name. There it often spreads half way up the sky; here Turner only saw it rise a short way, but he seized its appearance and drew it as he remembered it.

When all this has been said, there still remains, as the great pleasure of the plate, the imaginative conception of the towering Niesen, at home amongst the lightnings and the storm.[1] And Turner has emphasized this by rolling the lower clouds which have escaped from the cleaving sword of the lightning down its far side in whirling folds of vapour. For the clouds are its companions and its lovers, and out of them it speaks in thunder across the vale to its brother the Stockhorn.

[1] The earliest drawing made by Turner of this scene is in the Farnley Hall collection, and it is curious that there is only one flash of lightning in it, and that it is not behind the Niesen. That burning heart of the drawing was added afterwards to this plate of the Liber Studiorum.

No. XVI.

THE FIFTH PLAGUE.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

IN this engraving of the *Fifth Plague*, the effects of the storm upon the earth have no terror or magnificence. Turner had never seen the hail and lightning of the lands nearer the tropics, nor the desolation wrought by a tornado; and the scattered fires which here represent the description in Exodus—"the fire ran along upon the ground"—are more like ridges of burning furze than like flames lit by the wrath of God. But the thunder splendours of an angry sky had often been seen by Turner; and the sky here is solemn, full of awe and judgment, wrath and plague; and the banded lines of its fury, of equal cloud and fire, are driven over the earth as if they lusted for vengeance. The storm is at its height. Its forerunners of piled and convoluted vapours are passing onwards to the left. From its van, and breaking from its ragged edge ablaze with intolerable light, innumerable flashes, forked and ribboned, flare forth, and seem in

their madness of rage to be blown about and ravelled asunder by the fierce wind. Its central body has sunk down, black and crammed with deadly wrath, over the city on the right. It will not cease to pour forth doom till every house is made desolate.

But Turner, whose mind had nothing Oriental about it, could not see Egypt nor conceive the Mosaic story. The pyramids and the city are without any majesty or imagination. Moses is naïvely enough imagined. He stands as if a child had pictured him, and because of this very childishness of conception there is a certain simplicity, a directness, in his figure which have some attraction; and Aaron, crouching behind in terror on the ground, is conceived with the same simplicity. Both are as nothing in comparison with the awfulness of the sky. But a greater artist would have made the prophet the centre of the scene, and concentrated in him its majesty.

The dark pool and the shattered trees, and the man and horse hurled dead in a moment to the ground, are imaginative; the black stagnant water—as in the *Rizpah* and the *Jason*—is an element introduced by Turner when he wishes to bring horror into a place; and the tree torn in two and hurled over the dead man, approaches—though at a great distance—what Tintoret would have conceived.

PART IV.

ISSUED MARCH 29, 1809.

No. XVII.

FARMYARD WITH THE COCK.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

THIS composition—the *Farmyard and Cock*—though it is one of the least attractive in the Liber Studiorum, has its own interest, with others of the same type, in the history of Turner's mind. The painter *par excellence* of imaginative landscape has here endeavoured to represent the corner of a small farmyard. It is strange to look at it, and then to think of the ideal solemnity of the *Procris and Cephalus* or of the soft mystery of the *Hind Head Hill;* and the difference proves his range; but it would have been wiser had he left this class of subjects to those who cared for them. He had no pleasure in this drawing, but if it was worth doing at all, it was worth doing well. And he might easily have done it better. He drew pigs well when he chose, and he had no disdain for a farmyard,

but he has here, through lassitude of temper, drawn his animals badly, nor has he proved his hand in the rest of the work.

The composition of the piece is, as usual, careful. The horizontal lines of the cart are relieved of their monotony by the huge circle of its wheel and by the opposing lines of the second cart beyond it. The disposition of the hens and pigs is in Turner's usual pyramidal manner, with supports on either side to strengthen and ennoble the design. But the commonplace of the whole is too great to be redeemed.

The lines of the quiet sky which holds its beauty still over this ugly piece of earth repeat the lines of the cart and seem to give it sympathy. And the summer trees in the evening—for it is the hour of rest—look in upon the farmyard and whisper over it in the wind, gossiping with one another of their own matters now that the day is done, as the two peasants gossip with each other by the paling, and are glad that work is over.

No. XVIII.

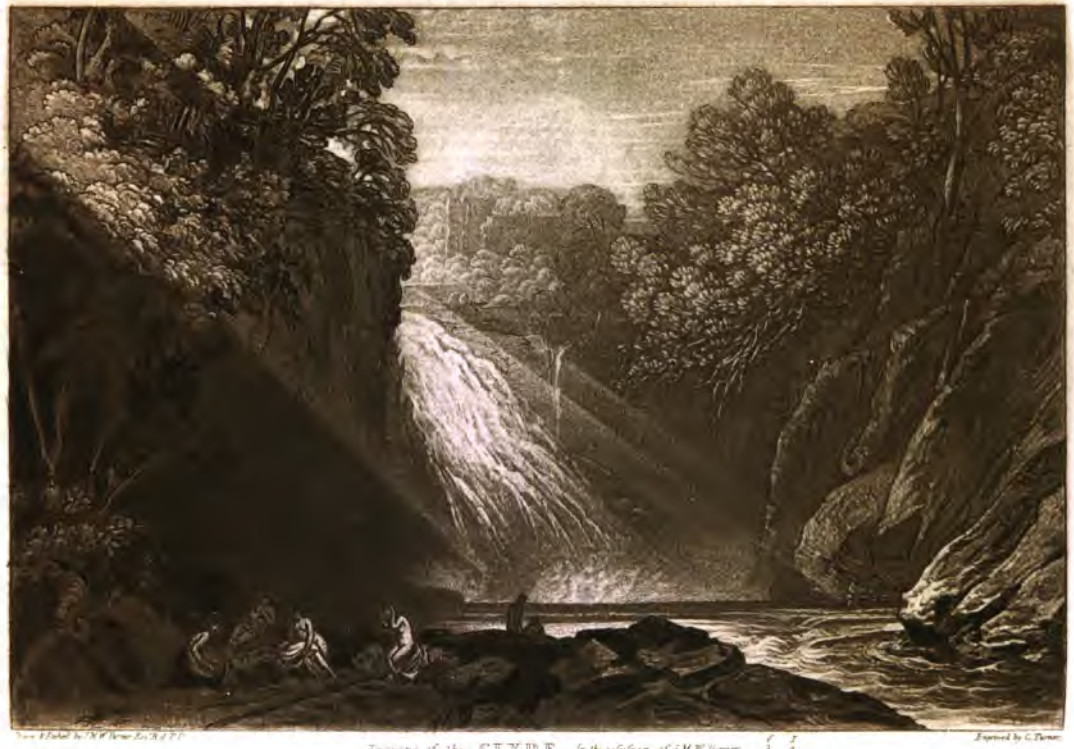
DRAWING OF THE CLYDE.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

IN the early proof from which the autotype is taken Turner has driven the rays of the sun at different angles through the foliage, and has reflected them at different angles from the varied slopes of the falling water. This was one of his experiments, but he did not consider it true to nature, and in a subsequent proof he has drawn three parallel diagonal lines in pencil to mark the true path of the rays—one across the foliage, two across the waterfall, and written underneath, "This will do." In that state the plate was published. All the pretty fancifulness of the rays in this impression is taken away. It is a good instance of his sacrifice of fantastic charm to truth.

One of those quiet afternoon skies of which Turner is so fond lies over this unfrequented hollow, so hidden that women are bathing in the pool where the backwater of the cascade is shallow. But their presence does not disturb the impression we receive from the drawing and

E. P.



Drawing of the CLYDE. In the possession of J. M. W. Turner

Engraved by C. Turner

which Turner felt as he drew—of a spirit of happiness in Nature apart from humanity. All things here are full of a glad enjoyment of their own life. "In themselves they all possess their own desire." But among them is one whose power and gladness are supreme. The waterfall is the spirit of the place. The passion, and the life of it, and the hurried race of its stream among the rocks in front are wild with lonely delight. The trees on both sides look over to see and share in the dancing of the water, and are drenched with its spray. The sunlight joins in the pleasure of the water and dances with it.

In truth, everything belongs to the cataract. Only the castle among the trees is set apart, but even to it the waterfall is united by the mill which uses for the work of the castle the descending stream. The waste of the mill-force tumbles into the fall in a vertical and quiet line on the right which contrasts admirably with, and enforces, the sloping and tempestuous rush of the cascade. Above the waterfall, the horizontal lines of the walls of the castle and of the clouds, bind together the two sides of the subject, and rest the eye which would otherwise be somewhat overwhelmed by the multitude and the variety of the curving lines. One of them, however, does a great deal of work. It is that of the trunk of the tree on the right which rising boldly opens out the background of the drawing, and gives depth to the hollow of the cataract.

Then the whole story of the river is told to us with all Turner's accuracy and insight. First, the smoothness of

the rush of the water before it dashes downwards is insisted on by the brightness of the sunlight that illuminates it. Then, we can tell from the surface of the upper fall in what manner the rocks below it are moulded, a matter which requires the most careful and tender drawing; but Turner never paints waterfall or torrent without giving us this information. Then, half way down, the main body of the water, dashing to the right into the pool below, throws up an ever-forming, ever-pulsating cloud of spray; and the work of disintegration this has done during centuries is shown in the deep recess hollowed out of the cliff. Over this the trees are hanging, their branches drooping downwards. At first it seems strange that all the lowest branches are leafless. But rising spray destroys up to a certain point the foliage which just above that point it makes luxuriant. This subtle piece of truth is here observed and recorded.

Again, on the left side, that portion of the fall which is not included in the oblique rush to the right tumbles down vertically, and its spray, as well as the whirl of the backwater of the pool, have formed another recess. But as the main force of the fall is expended on the right, this left recess is not so deeply hollowed out as the other; and its rocks are not worn in the same way as their opposite companions.

Once more, the water in the pool is in reality boiling upwards, but it seems calm—for the pool is deep, and the force of the descending water has pushed away the stones from below and piled them up in a ridge a little

lower down, and over this ridge the river breaks in foam. The channel now narrows, and the water rushing from both sides meets in turmoil in the midst, whirling fiercely and in curves—drawn with the utmost care for truth—around the projecting rock on the right, the surface of which Turner has carved and dug into holes that we may know how at a different level the swollen waters have done their work.

The whole history of the waterfall and its labours is thus told. The figures are fantastic, and are so arranged as to illustrate and intensify the lines of the composition.

No. XIX.

LITTLE DEVIL'S BRIDGE OVER THE RUSS ABOVE ALTDORFT, SWITZERLAND.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

THIS is the old bridge below Andermatt on the St. Gothard Pass, drawn when only a mule-path traced its thin line among the ghastly cliffs. We see it here, in the distance, crawling slowly along them like a serpent; and Turner, in his deep sympathy with the struggle of man for victory over the difficulties of Nature, throws upon it the lightning-like rays of sunlight. Midst of the desolation and gloom, this, at least, he thinks, shall be illuminated.

But a greater triumph than the path was the bridge, and though he cannot set it altogether into light, yet he fills the whole drawing with its presence. It is, in his feeling, greater here than the mountains; and its front of masonry, sweeping from side to side of the scene, fills

the eye with a more majestic image than the walls of rock above it. He has made it also a part of Nature. It seems to be an upgrowth of the will of the rocks themselves, and long companionship has bound it to them for ever. Nor does the sunlight neglect it. Brighter even than on the path is the radiance of the shining on its parapet and on the limb of its arch—an arch lightly wrought, and yet so strong that all the fierce storms that haunt this pass have not loosened its knitted stones or injured its grave serenity. Turner loved it as he drew it. It is with the greatest care that he has made the lines of the parapet and the footway of the bridge rise and fall in faint curves made by the settling of the masonry into absolute firmness, and he wished to make that impression on our mind. Mark too, how the parapet heaves above the arch in a faint and lovely curve, and with what a lift the bridge rushes upwards to meet the pathway. It is as if it were alive.

It still stands fast below the modern road. Its parapet is broken but the mass is unshaken, and to this day, through the beautiful toss of its curve, bent like a spring and seemingly as elastic, we can look up the gorge and see flashing across the awful hollow where the Reuss boils and foams in never-ending torment the broken sunlights Turner saw.

The weather of the piece fits Turner's conception of human intelligence conquering, but with difficulty, the savage forces of Nature. For the storm is passing away; the wind still blows freely but the clouds are dissolving;

the sun is conquering, the mountain tops are set free, and behind the dark pines the fires of life are shining. And few aspects of cloud are more beautiful in the Liber Studiorum than this—when the thin and slanting lines of transparent vapour are transfused and alternated with the rays of sunlight, and both light as well as vapour seem to be spun into fine threads by the whirling wind.

The mountains, great as they are, are not drawn with the same massiveness and descending power as Turner has drawn them in other representations of the St. Gothard; but I think he instinctively subordinated them to his bridge. He had not the same reason for lowering the impression we receive of the rocks beneath the arch, because he wished them to be conceived of as at one with the bridge, and as its deep foundations. And therefore he has hewn them into majesty, and preserved in many of their incurving lines the story of their having once had to do with the stream which now roars so many feet below. From either side they sink downwards to an angle which, inverted underneath the central stone of the arch, tends to lift it into the air and to give it stability.

But this is not all. The descending ridges of the mountains in the distance serve to deepen the gorge and ennoble the bridge. The same downward fall of all lines to the hidden path of the torrent is insisted on by the slant upwards of the blasted pines, paralleled and carried higher by the slope of the mountain side behind them; and the whole series is bound together by the

triangular knob of rock exactly below the crown of the arch and the turn of the distant footpath. This lozenge of rock is the keystone of the composition.

Turner's study of these pines and their rock foundations is in itself an abstract of the sentiment of the Alpine passes between the line of deciduous trees and the treeless region. In the *Chartreuse* we are still among the chestnuts; and savage as the torrent is and awful the precipices, there is Turner's tenderness in the evening air, in the workman returning home over the bridge, in the stream-fed slope among the saplings and flowers, in the quiet and rosy sunset seen far away. But here, higher up, where solitary Desolation abides amid destruction, Turner marks the deathfulness of the Upper Alps by the skeleton of the mule set in the foreground with its skull couched like a dragon's, and its ribs struck upwards in sympathy with the dead ribs of the withered pines. Only two carrion crows, with their gray plumage exaggerated into white, animate the place.

But yet there are things that hold fast to life—the iron pines. Wilder than the rocks themselves, they grow dark as the rocks and are rooted in their clefts. A few on the left are flourishing, but in how broken and torn a life; half naked, black against the light. As to those two pines in the foreground, for which Turner made several studies,[1] they have lived their life, and they seem to cry out to heaven against their long misery. And yet they have done their best, and Turner in his fierce and pathetic

[1] They may be seen in the National Gallery.

sympathy with them records it. Their roots have become part of the very rock itself. Few things in this book are finer than the drawing of the talons of the nearest pine which have struck themselves round the curving of the rock like an eagle's claws around his prey; or than the drawing of its trunk, where the foldings of the wood are like the foldings of the schist of which the cliff is made —as solid and as strong—one would think almost as old. Nor have these ancient trees even yet surrendered life. They cling to it as the Swiss clung to the liberty of their mountains, as the mountain path clings to the mountain sides.

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"Fog-horn" from "The Guard-ship at the Nore"

Frank Short sc after J M W Turner

No. XX.

THE LEADER SEA-PIECE;

OR,

THE GUARDSHIP AT THE NORE.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

THIS plate, commonly called the Leader Sea-Piece, is a companion to the *Ships in a Breeze*, No. X., p. 36, taken from Lord Egremont's picture. The sentiment of No. X. gathers around the commerce of England, its freedom, mastery, and activity upon the sea, under the guard of her navy. The idea of the *Leader Sea-Piece* is different. It is England watched over by her warships. The line-of-battle ship at anchor is the guardship at the Nore. Another ship of war in the distance doubles the impression of watchfulness and protection. Between them both the fishing-boats return safely to the land. The shore lies low, scarcely discerned; the rest is England's surest guard—the sea.

Britannia needs no bulwark,
No towers along the steep.

It is not the sea at peace which defends her, but the wild, tormented waves that run so fiercely here, their edges torn off by the wind which has made the sky above as wild and tossed as the water. The great cumulus clouds have all their upper rack blown away like the wave-crests underneath; and lower down they are trailed away, as if by a steady gale, into parallel lines of slanting stratus. The very rays of sunlight seem also to be driven into similar forms by the wind. Above, heavier clouds, charged with rain, are heaving forward, their folds full of a coming shower.

The sea is divided into four stripes of alternate dark and light, the nearest and largest of which is blackened by the squall which sends the fishing-boat along so swiftly. These horizontal stripes emphasize the horizontal lines of the anchored ships, and double the impression they are designed to make of firm and stately watchfulness. The beautiful curve made by the two fishing-boats and by the sloping patch of light on the shore;—the sweep of which is determined by the etched strokes on the stern of the nearest boat—is a lovely contrast to the horizontal lines of the sea and the men-of-war, and the rushing speed of the boats is equally set over against the stern quiet of the guardships. The slanting masts of these boats, at right angles to the clouds, yet both—clouds and boats—moved by the wind, seem to enhance the power of the growing gale, and the strained cable of the ship tells of the force with which it blows. The run of the sea, and its sharp curves are struck forth clearly by the

three white touches on the bars of the buoy which turn in an opposite direction to the waves. It is a pity, but it cannot be helped, that so much of the masterly etching of the waves is lost in the photograph, but the splendid drawing of their eddying sweeps around the buoy, and of the hollow behind it where the surface is made smooth by the headlong dip of the sea beneath it, can still be seen. It is in the work of the waves around this buoy that Turner tells exactly how strong he means the wind and the tide to be.

No. XXI.

MORPETH, NORTHUMBERLAND.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

MORPETH is one of the most admirably composed drawings in the Liber Studiorum. Like all great art, our feeling when we look at it is—How easy it would be to do this! as when we see bad work, we think—How difficult art is! But were an amateur to try it, he would find that the ease was in the great artist's genius, and not in him. For this harmony that we feel in the work is the result of a knowledge won by long labour and observation of what to keep and of what to leave aside, until at last the painter's hand acts and creates unconsciously, chooses and rejects without asking why, and makes harmony without one pause of consideration. Had Turner been questioned for what reason he did this or that, he would have answered—"I do not know," though had he taken the trouble to think about it, he could have told. But that is just the trouble an artist does not take. His business is to create, not to explain.

The plate is full of skilful repetitions and contrasts.

The kite leaning against the wall repeats the arch of the doorway above; the signboard in bright light beyond the bridge repeats the large dark one that juts out against the sky, and the line of the bridge repeats the line of the moor that dips towards the doorway of the Tower. As to the management of the light and shade on the road, and the skilful disposition of the horse and woman, I will not dwell upon them. Those who have eyes will see much more than I can tell.

The old Peel Tower is the central thought of the drawing of Morpeth, and Turner felt for it with his saddened love of the romance that had passed away. Dark and lonely he makes the moor around it, and sombre the cloudy sky of the north over its head. A little wildly-scattered light falls upon it, but the light is chiefly thrown upon the tall modern house below, where life is moving, and which, as it were in mockery, repeats its outline. From the gable of the tower no smoke ascends—only the vapour of the cloud hangs over its desolation—but the smoke of the vulgar house flares in the chill wind like a fire. And see how noble, in his sympathy, he has made the tower, and how he has insisted on its strength. It is small, but it is fixed in a hollow of the hill, so that the hill itself is its guard and foundation. Its foundations slope outwards to establish their grip upon the hill and to support the ponderous masonry of the upper story. The face of its gabled side is like a precipitous cliff. Its door, the battlements, are almost untouched by decay. But the plastered house below

already requires repair outside. The bridge also, and the wall of the house on the left belong to the elder time, and Turner took care to make them as grey and massive as he conceived the characters to be of those who built them.

It is these things which filled his heart as he drew —and the piece of moor beyond the bridge, with its savage broken lights and wild trees growing as if they had something of the nature of the Border riders in them, is an example of how a great artist can put into a little space the character of a whole time and its indwellers. Sky and moor and tower and trees all speak with one voice. Nor indeed is the old town less impressive. Its short set houses—the walls of those on the right are those of a later time—tell of a hard life and a poor, lived in the incessant trouble of rough weather rarely changing into warm sunshine. The shadows Turner has cast on his drawing are deep and heavy; the lights are dim with rain and angry. They symbolize the years of those that live in the town, whose rare pleasures are mixed with, and born out of pain. There is not one of the folk who are moving about who is not bitterly worked and worn and sad at heart. Even the one idler who leans over the bridge is sorrowful and weary.

The drawing is then filled with the spirit of the gray North—the spirit, in the town itself, of the set sad struggle of life sternly endured through poverty and pain —the spirit, in the country beyond the town, of that rude romantic passion and battle which beats like a heart in the Border ballads.

PART V.

ISSUED JANUARY 1, 1811.

No. XXII.

JUVENILE TRICKS.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* W. SAY.

THE hollow here represented may still be traced in the Green Park, the spring of water remains, but the grove of trees is changed. No stranger problem can be thought of than that which is presented so forcibly in this print—how it happened that one who could draw with elaborating love and with equal keenness of eye and heart the mystical beauty of Nature should represent humanity under forms so revolting. The chief figure among the boys is a sickly idiot, and the others are coarse beyond all words. Their very glee is base. They were, I suppose, the kind of boy Turner used to see about Maiden Lane when he was a youth, and he had no eye afterwards for others of a higher type, save perhaps when he drew the fisherlads of England.

Above them, with joy and care in every line, he dwells upon the work of nature, moulding in fibrous folding and in graceful rising the trunks of the trees—a study as careful and as delicate as any in the whole of this book. It is a strange problem, and I wonder if the painful horror he seems to have often had of man threw him all the more in utter loneliness on the breast of Nature, and isolated him with her into a love which enabled him to read her inmost secrets. But if this be so, and I think of it when I look at many drawings, he could not linger long in Nature's embrace alone. He was compelled by his heart to mingle humanity with Nature, and though he never drew men and women well, he filled his landscape with the sorrow and the thought, the joy and the passions of mankind. Of half his work it might well be said that the Nature he painted was a parable of which Man was the interpretation.

No. XXIII.

THE HINDOO WORSHIPPER;

OR,

HINDOO DEVOTIONS.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* R. DUNKARTON.

OF the first state of *Hindoo Devotions*, as this plate was called, very few impressions were taken before Turner saw reason to change the sky, owing, it is said, to failures in the copper. Before the alteration, it was free from clouds save for a few solemn bars of horizontal cirrostratus which, just touched with light on their under edges, hung high over the trees. Near the hills also there were a few drifting vapours, and the rest was the grave and level heaven of a misty afternoon.

An entire change was wrought, and not, I think, for the better, in the second state. The sky was made a mackerel sky, less solemn than the first, but in its continuous repetition and in its ordered arrangement of similar series of clouds, also dignified and calm, and

detaining the eye with pleasure from distance to distance. I conjecture that its lower range which, with its long horizontal lines of cloud one above another resembles a vast plain, is made so, to suggest and enlarge the expanse of the Roman Campagna, a portion of which we see below. It was indeed, as I think, this impressive surface that Turner saw in his mind when he made this drawing. It has nothing to do with the nonsense title of "Hindoo Devotions;" it is an ideal reminiscence of Rome and its scenery. The temple might almost have been directly sketched from that of Minerva Medica. The half-withered and stunted trees are such as grow in the Campagna. The stone pines, two and two together and scattered on ridges of ruin, belong to many a view along the Tiber. The mingling of trees and ruin on the further bank above the stream and the slow sluggish stream itself recall the banks of the Anio. The low hill beyond the plain has the outline and the sentiment of the hills seen from the platform of the Lateran. In truth, the whole sentiment of the scene is Roman.

Deserted, melancholy, ghostly, yet keeping its solemn grandeur, the Roman scenery retains its inextinguishable and pathetic appeal to our sympathy for the ruin of so much glory, for the passing away of so much of human life. No one can look at this drawing and doubt that Turner felt the unique sentiment of the place. The very ground he draws is built up of the ruins of temples and baths, and he sets the wild weeds to grow among the remains of pride and luxury, among the mourning of the

Gods. He embodies all the sorrow of Rome, and all the strange and haunted feeling of the wanderer who at night outside the Aurelian walls hears the dead whisper, and sees them pass him by, white in the white mist.

When we turn from the drawing as an ideal representation of feeling, and ask how far it is an ideal representation of natural truth, our satisfaction is not so great as it is in other and even less important subjects in the Liber Studiorum. The sky indeed is admirable, even without its distinct aim at sentiment. The hill and plain seem to dream in the velvet air of Rome, and the two pines on the ridge of ruin, which throw the plain and hill into distance, possess that lonely aerial look which makes those isolated trees in Italy enchant the imagination. The dip of the road, the broken ground and banks of ruin, and the brushwood beyond them which binds them together with so beautiful a curve; the disposition of the tree trunks with the ground, and the mystery of the road itself, are all skilfully wrought, but none of these so much as usual with Turner tell us their natural truths in a beautiful way. I do not like to blame the trees on the left hand, but I do not understand them and cannot like them, though I suppose Turner wanted them to have this form in this place. The nearest stone pine is a careful study, and the branches in their balance and arrangement, in their combination of rigidity and spring, and their tale of the ceaseless effort of the tree to set right the original push it got out of the perpendicular (an effort one can follow all along the stem) are full of interest; so is the intricacy of the

upper branches and the repose of the thick foliage, but I do not think that Turner can be said to have ever drawn a stone pine in a perfect manner, or with the sympathy and joy it needs; and this tree is no exception. As to its companion, it is a libel. But these criticisms matter little. This drawing is poetical in a way not many of the Liber Studiorum are, and in a way too much neglected. It is a piece in an old manner, and Turner seems—so versatile is he—to the manner born.

No. XXIV.

COAST OF YORKSHIRE, NEAR WHITBY.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* W. SAY.

AFTER many representations in the Liber Studiorum of the sea in calm, and in days of angry wind, we are placed at last in this engraving of the *Coast of Yorkshire* in the midst of a full and roaring gale, and before a terrible sea. The air is filled with the fine mist of the spray, and the cliffs loom dim through its driving veil. Still more dim, for its own foam-cloud accompanies it, is the mighty wave which at the back, lifting itself high in the air before it breaks, will in a moment, all thunder and snow, rush like a wild beast into the chasm under the great headland. Down this chasm the retreating mass of the preceding billow, the foam of which has climbed to the very topmost edge of the cliffs, is whirled outwards at full-speed, and, as it rejoins the main sea, its upper surface is caught by the wind and blown back again towards the shore. At the same time, the incoming has begun to clash with the retreating wave, and their fierce meeting has made a

very hell of tormented waters. Nor does the record of these truths satisfy Turner. He marks two other facts only seen by those who have studied the storm-billows battling on a coast. One is that the under sweep of the down-dragging billow has so pressed upon the centre of its approaching companion that the water on its ridge, now curling to its burst, leaps upwards in pinnacles of foam; the other is, that the surface of the same wave in retreat, being of churned foam, is light of weight, and is borne up the smooth and ponderous side of the incoming wave as if it were oil. Above this tempest of water is the dark mist of spoon-drift, and as we look through it we seem to know that it is incessantly supplied from infinite sources of vapour far at sea, and incessantly hurried forward by the fierce tyranny of the gale. This is the story told to us in this one corner of the drawing, and whether its truth or its imagination is the greatest, I cannot tell. The best thing to say is that they are both one.

The dark mass of the headland would press forward too much were it not for the disposition of the gulls by which sea and cliff are thrown backwards, and by the triangular arrangement of which the eye is led downwards to the base of the rocks, and from that to the mast of the shipwrecked fishing-boats. Curiously enough, this boat dashed on the rocks, and the sailors in wild attitudes upon them, are like a shipwreck in the Liber Veritatis which Mr. Ruskin has treated with savage humour; nor does the scene seem more possible in Turner than in Claude, indeed less possible, for here the

sea is, as it is not in the sketch of Claude, tremendous. The figures closer in shore are also fishermen who are being saved, and one of them in the grasp of another seems to be for the moment mad with terror. It is Turner's way of enhancing the horror of the storm. Behind them, in magnificent realization, the billows run into another narrow cleft where they are compressed together into foam; and the foam, borne inwards and upwards by the wind, rises in a flying cloud of rage almost to the height of the cliff. Below, another aspect is given of the shore. Two rocks form a narrow entrance, and within there is an open space in which the exhausted waves are whirling round and round in eddies, every one of which is studied from Nature with the greatest care. There, placed round it, in order to insist on the circular whirling, men are saving the flotsam and jetsam of the wrecks.

The cliffs are lias, and drawn so well that it would be possible for a geologist to name them, and the highest of them, fronting the sea like a fortress, has the haughty air of a defier of the storm. On it, set a little inland, and in a space of clearer sky, where the gale is for a moment less violent—for Turner knew the gusty nature of a north-east tempest on that coast—stands the lighthouse: the one witness of the watchful struggle of Man with Nature, and of his monarchy over it. It dominates all the scene. But it could not save the fisher-folk from ruin, and we are left by Turner to muse upon the helplessness of man and on the sorrow of his toil.

No. XXV.

HIND HEAD HILL, ON THE PORTSMOUTH ROAD.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* R. DUNKARTON.

HIND HEAD HILL is one of the plates which it is extremely difficult to photograph. The mass of dark hill-sides becomes almost of an uniform tint and of uniform darkness in the photograph. All the gradations of shade, which are in the original subtly varied from point to point, are lost. The etched lines also which mark out the structure of the hills are drowned out of sight, and so are the lights which relieve the mass of shadow, especially those at the base of the round-topped hill, above the clustered sheep. Enough remains, however, to make the reproduction interesting, and the sky and the foreground come out well.

The drawing of the foreground is worthy of close study. Nature has moulded this upland with rain and frost, and by the growing grass, for centuries; men have made paths across it; the feeding sheep have scored it with their following steps. Turner has told the whole story of these

influences by the lines of his etching, and by the varied falling of the shadows. He has done more. He has so arranged the sheep along the edge of this shoulder of the down that we feel its rising curve and realize its height; and, still uncontent, has so disposed the other sheep and the attitude of the shepherd that they explain, even better than the etching, the modulations of the surface of the hill.

The sky is also of the highest interest, the moment being chosen when a great rain cloud has slowly drifted away to the right, while the afternoon sunlight, dividing the thinner folds of the retreating mass, breaks it up into separate clouds and sends the rays darting upwards and downwards from their broken edges. For subtle truth of dispersed light and shade, for imaginative arrangement, and for a solemn splendour of feeling and thought, so that it seems as if Nature herself had taken the pencil of Turner, this sky is not surpassed in the Liber Studiorum.

The feeling of the whole subject is in harmony with the skies. It is the sentiment of a sorrow as gentle as the rain passing into the peace and sunshine and pleasure of life's afternoon, when the shepherd of life has leisure to read, and the labours of life, like the sheep, rest for a little time. The hour is given to quiet. The coach travels in safety, the shepherd reads undisturbed. The days of highwaymen are gone by. The gallows is empty, and as if in forgiveness, the brightest sunlight falls on it and shines behind it. The rain has been warm and has fallen softly, without wind, and the vapour it has left nourishes

with tender dew the flowers on the hills. In a few minutes the landscape will be flooded with veiled and tender light, and the clouds illuminate themselves to receive their lord the Sun who comes forth from his pavilion. The hills on the left, and those on the right into whose recesses the mail coach leads our imagination—in gently flowing lines and soft enfoldings, strike the same spiritual note as the sky. The deep-sunk valley where the darkness is made alive by the white smoke of the burning furze; the lowly alders and the dwarf oaks that climb the hill and border the pool, their dark glades pierced by the brilliantly lit water; the resting sheep, the resting shepherd—are all in harmony, parts of the one sweet melody. Yet, though the hills are tenderly folded and faintly curved, their outlines are firmly and sharply drawn, so that we feel the rock under the short grass—nor are their flowing ridges left without the contrast that gives them value. The bright horizontal bar of the valley pool, and the vertical lines of the coach oppose these long sweeping curves, and waken a new pleasure: and the repetition of the outline of the nearest hill by that of the figure of the shepherd increases the peace of the drawing as much as the reverse of the angle of the hill-top by the two sheep exactly under it increases the majesty of the hill.

But all these matters of composition, which Turner wrought out instinctively, are as nothing in comparison with the poetic sentiment of the whole. The artist loved the soft shining after rain, and all it imaged to him in the heart of man. And he loved it as it came to pass among

the moors and downs of England, and drew it a thousand times, oftener far than he drew her storms. In all his work there is no record of it more beautiful and more temperate than *Hind Head Hill.*

No. XXVI.

LONDON, FROM GREENWICH.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

TURNER'S heart was in this drawing. He liked all he had to do—London, his 'kindly nurse,' the distant spires, the antique towers, the mingling of smoke and cloud in the sky; the river whose banks he haunted as a boy, the ships sailing up and down, the wharves, the architecture of the Hospital which it amused him to draw, the Hospital itself where the sailors he loved were housed, the rich park, the trees, and the stately deer. All pleased his soul, and the drawing came forth out of his inward pleasure into outward beauty. The Hospital seems to fill the whole space of the picture, and Turner has disposed the rising ground where the deer are lying, so as to enclose, as it were in a frame, the noble building and give it greater dignity. Then he placed in front of it, like a base to a pillar, the broad outspread meadow, and gave it, for foundation, the strength of the earth. The space of flat land on the left, with its broken lights, continues the line of the roof of

the Hospital, and this continuousness seems to increase its size to the eye and its importance in the imagination. Then comes the beautiful and curving sweep of the river, opposed to all the horizontal lines, but bringing them all into harmony. Boats, ships, are scattered all over it. Everywhere there are shipyards along its sides and a forest of masts beyond. "It is"—thought Turner—"a highway of the nations. It is London, and not Greenwich that I draw, and commerce and not war is the source of London. And there she lies along the horizon, filling it from end to end, the mysterious city, full of an impassionating attraction; and rolling over it, the smoke which tells of home, and human labour, and incessant life below. So, I will make the smoke beautiful, and bathe St. Paul's in it and all the spires, and wreathe it into the loveliest lines I can draw, and make it the plaything of the wind, until, borne away to the right where the city ceases, it is swept upwards to lose itself in the heavens. But its lighter and fantastic curves are not quiet enough for thought, nor grave enough. So I will dispose above it the clouds of heaven, and their lines shall be various, but firm in ordered array and soft as wind-blown shadows; and higher still there shall be a space of peaceful sky with floating clouds spun into delicate threads of gold, to tell of that which may sit afar in stillness above the smoke and stir of this dim spot." This was his voiceless thought as I imagine it to have been. At least, he was happy when he conceived this engraving, and the mood was not a common one.

PART VI.

ISSUED JUNE 1, 1811.

No. XXVII.

WINDMILL AND LOCK.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* W. SAY.

THE sentiment of the Windmill, high on the hill against the sunset sky, has been set forth by Mr. Ruskin in a noble passage which I quote in the Appendix. But the same kind of feeling pervades the rest of the drawing. It is not an ideal sentiment as in the *Hindoo Devotions*, but that which gathers round the hard-working life of the English poor; not sympathy with the wayside worshipper whom half in careless scorn Turner may have made into a Hindoo, but with the difficult drudgery of men who snatch their supper by the wayside, whose rest is taken among their tools and toils, and whose beasts of burden are the daily companions of their masters.

The pity of the artist's heart fills the drawing he has made. All things are growing still with the sinking of

the sun. It is the hour of hard-won repose, and the slow sluggish life of the canal and its dreary labour are contrasted, in Turner's half pathetic half bitter way, with the swift rushing of the sun to its couch and with the splendour of its kingly canopies. But even in the sky, the ordered continuity of the clouds, as if they were presided over by one thought, impress the mind with peacefulness, and a number of repetitions of objects all along the course of the canal, to which it is needless to draw special attention, are used to create the same feeling. Nor is the mill itself, unmoved by the wind, and resting in the lofty sky, less the teller of repose than the heavy boat that sleeps far below in the dark water, or its companion whose firelight illuminates the gloomy depth of the lock. There is only one touch of active work in the whole drawing, where the two men heave round the lever of the lock-gates, and it is there to deepen by a single sharp contrast the quiet of the whole. The distant landscape of trees and bridge (the upward curve of the bridge being used to lift the ground to the eye) derives a charm from the golden mist in which it has gone to sleep; and Turner has put on the left of the mill the tops of a few trees to inform us that behind the hill the landscape has the same still monotony.

The lock-gate, swung back to the wall and rising steeply from the water, carries the eye upwards to the mill which it lifts into the air; the door which hangs aside from the mill adds to that aerialness of it which is finally asserted by the sweep of its upper sail into the very

zenith. The two millstones resting on the ground, and in full light, seem to give a life to the mill; their circles at once relieve and strengthen, by contrast, the vertical and horizontal lines of its pedestal. The slope of the cart and of the staircase still further modifies the rigidity of these lines,—a charitable office which the sloping sails perform for the upper part of the building. Look too at the force and boldness with which the pivot of the sails looks forth like a horn with eyes into the sunset. It also makes the mill alive. Out of it looks the spirit of the building.

The sky is full of interest. The higher clouds are in oblique parallel lines, sloping down from the right-hand upper corner; and this series meets lower down, as in the *Hindoo Devotions*, another series of horizontal bars of cloud. The effect of the setting sun on such a sky is to throw the clouds, as we see them here, into apparent curves, the highest point of the curves being immediately above the sun, so that the king of day seems to go to his sleep under a triumphal arch. This appearance is caused, not by any actual change in the arrangement of the clouds, but by their being apparently destroyed in the path of the intensest light. And Turner has taken pains to indicate the actual lines of the clouds below the dazzle of the light, to tell us the truth that underlies the appearance.

No. XXVIII.

JUNCTION OF SEVERN AND WYE.

Drawn, Etched, and Engraved by J. M. W. TURNER.

THE print from which this autotype is taken is a proof which has been washed over with colour by Turner. The foreground is, therefore, unlike that in ordinary first states, dark, and much of the etched detail of leaves and broken ground is lost. But the effect of light and shade is broader than in the untouched first state, and I have preferred, in spite of the loss, to submit the touched proof to photography.

The plate was etched and also engraved by Turner. The etching is full among the trees, but is more generalized than it is in any other plate of the Liber Studiorum along the banks of the Wye and the distant country beyond the Severn. As to the engraving, the mezzotint is put on and rubbed off in Turner's unconventional fashion, and exactly as an engraver would not, and perhaps could not have done it. The sky is a curious study in engraving, and part of it seems to have been treated with acid. All the foreground has been dashed in with a broad-toothed

tool,—the roulette—over the etching, and then mezzo-tinted. The boldness of this work may be contrasted with the delicacy with which the lights are wrought upon the river, but even these are excelled by the subtle engraving of the misty light which on the left hand comes gleaming through the foliage of the grove.

The drawing itself is more of a composition in the so-called classical style than generally prevails in the Liber Studiorum, but while the manner of the stylists is followed, the matter is closer to natural truth than it would be in the hands of Claude or Gaspar Poussin. The trees are conventional, but they are skilfully arranged so as to give distance to the Castle and the Severn. But the real interest is in another part of the subject. It is worth while to follow downwards the banks of the stream; to examine how Turner has varied the descending lines of the cliff, while he preserves the unity of its stratification; to mark the way in which the sloping banks on the margin of the river are drawn, so that we have all the facts we need recorded concerning the disintegration of the rocks above, and the deposition of mud by a tidal stream below. This representation of the results of Nature's long labour is even more remarkable when we look at the flat meadow lands at the mouth of the Wye. We can tell from the drawing how they have been laid down, and also how, as the Wye deposited them, they have been further influenced and arranged by the tidal flowing of the greater river. By careful artifice of light and dark, of fall and turn of cliff, the windings of the river and its

course are drawn out into length before the eye. And it is by the faintest touches, by almost imperceptible curves in the etched lines as they approach the river, that we are told how the height of the banks lessens as the Wye draws near its junction with the Severn.

One of the most difficult things Turner had to do was to make us conceive that the river ran in a deep gorge below the height. He has done this by the insertion of the inverted angle of pure white seen in the very midst of the drawing against the dark brushwood. This is repeated and drawn attention to by the angle which the broken ground makes below it, and by the triangle of light beyond it where the river turns for the second time.

Again, as in *Chepstow*, the majesty of the Castle is impressed upon us. Its keep climbs into the air, its tower at the angle commands the stream and descends into it like a wall of cliff. The sky is very pure, flowing almost like a river, and its upper clouds resemble and are made to resemble the softly drawn-out banks of the level fields at the junction of the waters. It is kept throughout in harmony with the broad smooth streaming of the Severn, and the calm sunlit spaces of the Wye. Breadth, openness, and the sense of a great river with its great tributary passing onwards into the greater vastness of the sea—these make the charm and the dignity of this drawing.

No. XXIX.

MARINE DABBLERS.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* W. SAY.

IN the *Marine Dabblers*, heavy clouds are driven by wind over the sky, but between their battalions fields of clear or clearer sky are interspaced, where sunlight and vapour are mingled together. This is a common aspect of the weather in the sea-side skies of the Liber Studiorum, and it seems at times monotonous. But though monotonous, it is manifold in effects, and therefore likely to be chosen by an artist. In this plate one vast rain cloud is passing away to the right, and behind it, following in a more open heaven, are layers of cloud of less volume the edges of which are touched with radiance. Out of the midst of these the sunlight breaks and Turner uses it with a purpose. He makes it strike upon the boy who is the centre and central thought of the drawing. The labourers with whom Turner had most sympathy, towards whom indeed he felt tenderly, were those who toiled upon the sea. He takes pains with the drawing of all fisher-folk; the two men in this print are well drawn.

And all the elements which, developed in the man, make up the character of the grave, religious, quick-couraged, and gentle Cornish fisherman—to speak of a class I have known—men capable of silent sacrifice, as honest as they are brave, and having a special note in their nature caused by living always in the changing war and peace of the elements, are as far as Turner could do it embodied in this boy. He looks as if the winds had all his life been his companions; and though the boys beside him are coarse and ugly, yet they are not vulgar. They are wholly occupied in their amusement,—playing at the business they will afterwards pursue, and Turner's grim sense of the danger and trouble of their kind of life, and of what may be the fate of the boats quietly drawn up on the shore, is shown in the shipwreck of the toy boat. He could not help dwelling on the trouble of humanity. Nor has he omitted to mark in the massive strength of the fishing-smack, and in the ponderous weight of its sails, how fierce its battle is with the wind and the sea.

Lastly, see how the sand has been washed and piled up below the bank, and with what truth the waves come round it. Mark also the beautiful and delicate drawing of the rapidly receding wave, broken into rough water over sand and shingle where in the background the two fishermen are standing; and the curving lines of the slowly ebbing and smooth water in the foreground, not running down over shingle, but moving shallow, over sand. The dark stones in the right-hand corner, put in as an apex to a triangle, knit the composition into unity.

No. XXX.

NEAR BLAIR ATHOL, SCOTLAND.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* W. SAY.

BLAIR ATHOL is one of those drawings of Turner which is dedicated to the secret life that is in Nature. The greater number of the Liber Studiorum are pervaded with a human interest. Even in subjects where the sky and earth are treated with the greatest care and elaboration, as in *Solway Moss* or in the *Peat Bog*, the weary labour and striving of men are chief in Turner's thoughts. But here the fisherman is more a natural part of the landscape than the centre of it. He awakens its solitude, but the solitude is greater than he, and does not tell him of its marvels.

This then is more than a fishing-stream in a glen, it is one of those lonely places that Wordsworth thought possessed a soul. Alas! all the mysterious secrecy of the low ravine dark with bending foliage, among the rocks of which the stream cries, and where the kelpie might find deep pools to dwell in, is lost in the autotype.

Every gradation, even the branches of the trees and all the brushwood, are merged in one uniform shadow. The same thing has happened on the right above the fisherman. The hollowed bank, made by the disintegrating shale, is in the engraving covered with deep-etched undergrowth, full of changing tints. Nothing is left of it: nothing, I fear, could be left of it. But the river has been fairly developed, and the sky and the lighter foliage of the plate are successful

To that inner secret place, down which the stream, its life, is falling, Turner has given a portal, as if to a temple. On either side two rocks extend into the stream. One is clothed with trees, and the other, which lies half athwart the water, seems like a great boulder. It is in reality the end of a spur of living rock. Both are being worn away by the rushing river, but the seeming boulder, the curved hollow under which has been scooped out long ago, is at present spared much suffering. The wearing force of the water is now spent on its opposite companion.

When the stream has passed beyond the low waterfall it is whirled into the recess behind the boulder; and forced out of that, is dashed against the left-hand bank of rock round which Turner has marked its swirling with a few keen-etched lines. It then continues to the left, breaking into foam over the shallow, and finding rooms wings again to the right and covers all its surface with curving ripples and transverse waves, the forms of which are caused by the hidden ridges of its bed. Under the boulder the water is smooth and full of reflections. The rush of the

stream in the middle of the channel has made a backwater in this place; but the water here detained must escape somewhere; and Turner marks the place where it escapes by those curving lines which start from the dark shadow and twist downwards across the horizontal ripples—like the figure 3 turned the opposite way—till at last they are caught and carried away into the general course of the stream. Every fisher will know that this is a glorious place for a rise. And the fisherman here, who has not much care for this nest of Nature, serves unconsciously the artist's use, and his uplifted arm and rod, continued by the broken stem above, lift the whole bank into the air, and set back the woody hollow behind him into deeper shadow. Out of the hollow rise the birches, Scotland's tree. They are disposed in two masses, one thrown back to the right, the other, over the boulder, to the left. Like two arms cast upwards, they serve thus to open out the landscape above the hidden dell; and, by this contrast, to make greater the secret of its solitude. The two stems, springing in the form of a V above the point of the boulder, repeat, in miniature, this arrangement. A separate character belongs to both these groups, and we may, though the thought is too fanciful, see in them the two types of Highland character that Scott painted in Rob Roy Macgregor, and in Allan M'Aulay. In the midst, between these two massed groups of foliage, rises the youngest and lightest tree, the girl of the place, tossing her feathery crown, the image of the gay and brave the young and

high romance that Scott put into the soul of Flora Macdonald and of Catherine Seyton. This tree divides the low range of hills with its stem, and forms for the composition of the foliage above what the boulder jutting into the stream does for the composition below—the central light between two masses of shadow.

Opposite, on the left bank, birch trees grow out of the frost-hewn rents of the rock; and then, to give the mass weight and variety, the heavy-leaved chestnut is introduced, not, I think, very happily, but Turner knows best. And here he thinks again of the heart of his drawing—the secret recess where the lonely stream descends; for he sets on the edge of the rock two stems, in bright light, that we may deepen for ourselves the mysterious gloom beyond.

That mystery is part of the wild beauty of the earth that beckons to us out of its solitary places, but the face of which we seek in vain to look upon. Often in a silent glen like this we seem to hear its Presence call on us by name, but whether in mockery or love we cannot tell. Its voice has a different note in different lands, and the emotion the cry awakens is of one kind in England, of another in Italy, of another in Scotland. The great artist feels the difference, and Turner has painted here, not the soul of the water dells of England, but that of all the Highland glens.

No. XXXI.

LAUFFENBOURG ON THE RHINE.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* T. HODGETTS.

TURNER was unfortunate in the engraver of the *Ville de Thun* and of this plate. I cannot believe that he meant the gloom of the town to be so uniform, or its houses to possess so little interest. The rocks are heavily handled, and the river under the bridge ought to have more force and grandeur in its flow. It is more like a Yorkshire stream than the Rhine. Nevertheless, when it comes to the narrow cleft, its furious rush, half darkness and half flame, is the finest thing in the drawing. The other point of interest is the pale and sober sky with its sunlit bars of cloud. Its massiveness would be too great were it not relieved by the two trees high on the right hand which set it back into distance. But its brooding quietude is not too deep. It is this which gives dignity to the subject.

The day was gray when Turner made his sketch,

and his thought became grave and still. A severe, vigilant, enduring temper of soul should belong to those who live in such a place, always listening to the roaring of the river among the rocks through which it has ground its way, and looking forward like the river to rest, after the solemn and weary strife of life—and this seems to be the sentiment which Turner felt as he drew the Teutonic town. The dark streets, touched with cold light, belong to the hard-working folk we see upon the rocks below; but they are not all unhappy, nor yet untouched by love. It is not, perhaps, without meaning that the brightest light in the drawing is on the young girl whose hat is garlanded with flowers; and love is sometimes fairest and most constant in a life which is gray, whose weather is stormy, and whose toil is difficult.

Nor are the two extremes of the battle of life and of the peace after battle unrepresented. The agony of the river is looked down upon by the quiet heaven. The stern castle and its towers are set in a gloomy sky, but the belfry on the right, like a beacon that guides into the harbour of God, rises into the light of the evening where it grows tender above the west.

PART VII.

ISSUED JUNE 1, 1811.

No. XXXII.

YOUNG ANGLERS.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* R. DUNKARTON.

THIS print and others in the Liber Studiorum have been called commonplace, and I cannot dispute it. The figures in them are more than commonplace, they are ugly; and they represent low types of humanity. But they are not vulgar, save in one—the *Juvenile Tricks;* and there I suppose that Turner meant to draw the baser type of London boys. But the lads in the *Marine Dabblers* and in this plate are not vulgar, for they are enjoying what they are doing, and what they do is not base. They are coarse, and coarsely drawn; but they are true to their type, and Turner never gilded the poor. Unlike some of his other peasants, these youths are not sickly with starvation: they are the rough, working breed of the suburbs of a country town the bold and staring houses of which we see beyond

the stream. Nothing can be more disagreeable than the broken water-can, the clothes, the hoop, the hat, and the bottle in the foreground. All these things, however, are in character. The one graceful figure is that of the working man fishing near the tree; and he is graceful because he knows his work. It is the true attitude of the fisherman.

But when we look at Turner's representation of Nature, we find his poetry. It is rustic poetry, a commonplace nook of pollard willows and bulrushes and still water, and Turner did not care much for the plants or the dirty stream, but gave—as if he were wearied with commonplace—his whole force to the drawing of the willows and the misty space of osier plantation behind them. The sinewy folding of the stem of the large pollard, its ragged and knotted ends, the spring outward and upwards of its branches and their insertion into the trunk, are truth itself, and ought to be carefully compared with the equally fine drawing of the younger trees on either side of the standing boy. In these there is a fresher life, a more vigorous leap of branch, a fuller foliage. It is crabbed age and lissome youth met together. The intricate interlacing of branches, their curving backwards and upwards, their mingled litheness and rigidity, the exquisite etching of the light foliage, are worthy of all praise. But Turner was sad enough, even when he had done this fine work. The place was too ugly for him. And he ended his drawing by placing over it the dullest and dreariest sky in the whole of the Liber Studiorum.

No. XXXIII.

ST. CATHERINE'S HILL, NEAR GUILDFORD.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* J. C. EASLING.

THE foundation of this Chapel to St. Catherine dates back to the time of Henry III.: and later in its history a Richard de Wauncey obtained a charter to hold a fair beneath it on the eve and the morrow of S. Matthew's day. It is this fair, with all its tents climbing the hill, and the street filled with booths and holiday games that Turner has drawn in the "England and Wales." Above it stands the Chapel on the ridge, and a heavy shower, dark and driven by the wind, approaches from the right. The road is deep under the precipitous hill-side, and the Guildford coach comes down it through the rain.

At every point the representation of the subject differs from that given in the Liber Studiorum. This drawing is taken from the other side of the hill. It is as quiet as the other is turbulent; instead of storm, the sky is full of pleasant air and light, and instead of mirth

and merchandise of men, we see the quiet farming life of England. The little Chapel is scarcely thought of in the noise of the fair, but here it is the spiritual power of the scene. It stands broken and sorrowful, the witness to a bygone faith, roofless, windowless, but at peace; and Turner sets behind it the sky of a late afternoon, pale, but lit by the dazzling of a white cloud filled with sunshine. The blessing its sorrow needs Nature bestows upon it. It has done its work for man and God, and Turner paints it in its ruined rest. As in the *Dunstanborough*, he has here also laid the sheep about the hill to increase the impression of quiet; not forgetting, in the midst of sentiment, so to dispose them that their grouping may minister to the composition and draw attention to the way in which the sides of the hill have been weathered by the toil of Nature.

But though the house of God is in ruins, and with it the form of religion it enshrined, there is one thing which remains always the same—the doings of man with the land, the work of the farmer. And to this—in contrast with the Chapel whose life is over—the lower part of the plate is dedicated. It is no picturesque place. Turner painted English life as it was; and the struggle of the poor is uppermost in his mind in all these rustic subjects. This is a common farm, and rude are the labourers that tend it. But pathetic feeling is given to them by Turner's anxious kindness. He paints them at the hour of rest, and the sense of its consolation broods over this little world. The barn stands

among its trees like a homestead, roofed and warm. The horses unyoked, and wearied out, are going to the stall, and the labourer passes forth to fetch them water. The cattle are coming home with the milkmaid, and the bullocks from the plough,—and there is not a leaf astir in all the trees in the windless evening.

The composition of the drawing is a triumph of quiet power—not one exaggerated or rude line, but soft and flowing curves of road and walls and hill, met and enforced by the upright figures of the labourer and of the milkmaid which repeat and oppose each other, and by the prominent and advancing front of the barn. The rounded outlines of the cloud and of the tree tops—both of which in their descending curves deepen the hollow to which the road rises and on the ridge of which the woman stands—are set over against each other, and unite the heaven and the earth. The great trunk in the left foreground, leaning back, and the tree stems beyond open out a vista which carries us away from the enclosed hollow in which, on first looking at the plate, we feel we are too much imprisoned. The still spaces of sky seen on either side between the trees and the hill refresh the eye, and tell us that beyond the hill we shall escape into a wide and distant country. Even in quiet subjects of this kind Turner supplies food to the imagination.

Many persons have made it a grave objection that the gate if closed would only protect half the open space, and Turner, they say, is here asleep. But that is exactly what he meant. The other portion of the gate is behind

the lower wall, and has been opened and pushed back. One sees from the upright on which the labourer's hand is resting that it will meet another of the same kind, and be bound to it by a loop. It is always wisest to believe that a great artist knows what he is doing.

No. XXXIV.

MARTELLO TOWERS, NEAR BEXHILL, SUSSEX.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* W. SAY.

THIS is one of the plates which do not much interest the general public, nor is it one of the greater or of the ideal subjects. But it has its own character, and Turner has not sought to sensationalize it. He has been content with its limitations. When the landscape of the earth was not striking, Turner employed his imagination upon the clouds and on their doings with the wind and sun. This stretch of Sussex shore with the towers is made interesting by the sky. But the world above is not so remarkable as to overwhelm the quiet world below. The sky has weight and power, but it is simple. The weather is such as he often loved to paint—squalls of wind and rain, with great heads of storm-swept cloud, and through the rifts of cloud broken sunshine. In the first region of the air, close to the earth, the masses of vapour are driven like a river before the wind. In the middle region, the force of the

gale is less, and the clouds seem, by their weight, to press with their lower volumes against the wind, while their upper and thinner folds are curled over and blown forward. A few lines of stratus, higher up, show that it is calmer still in the uppermost regions of the sky whence comes the sunlight.

The vapour below lifts, or seems to lift, on the horizon, whence the squall of rain and wind is coming,—a common aspect of storm, but used here not only for its truth, but to enable us to see the far headlands and the towers that guard England. It is in this guardianship of England that the sentiment of the subject lies, and the central tower, all in light, fixes our feeling on this thought. But the storm above defends England also, nor is the great chalk cliff without its aspect of defiance.

But beyond this sentiment, Turner wished to embody the main characteristics of the South-Eastern coasts of England. And he has almost given them all. The distant headland is typical of the Kent and Sussex shores, and so is the curved sweep inward of the bay. The chalk cliff, which heaves itself like Behemoth out of the earth, though low, fills the air: the dip downwards of the meadows at its edge, the form of the winding path across it, the short grass, and the low trees which, blown landward by the prevailing wind, nest themselves, but rarely, in the crannies of the chalk; the slope of débris which has fallen from above, the hollow place between this slope and the ridge of the beach, within which the sea-road is naturally made; the

great beach itself, piled up by the incessant rush of the Channel tidal wave, are all characteristic of this coast. Of the curves of the uplifted beach, of its manner of rise and fall, Turner has made an accurate study. Just as true to nature is the pool under the cliff near at hand, with those plants on its margin which flourish near the sea, where the salt of the spray is lightly sprinkled on them by the wind. The broken surface of its water is due not only to the wind that is blowing, but to the impulse of the spring which forms the pool. It is the telling of all these physical truths which makes this plate so interesting.

But Turner does not only mean to tell physical truth. He suggests the human life and work and sorrow of the sea-shore. The shattered boat, embedded in the shingle, speaks of shipwreck and storm and the mastery of the ocean over human lives: higher up the seamen are mending their boats; near at hand, the fisher's family are returning home, and Turner, with his usual tenderness for the domestic life of sailors, draws with some beauty the mother and the child together. Nor does he neglect—and this is frequent in his sea-pieces—the element of romance, rude as it is, that the revenue officers made on the coast during his time. The two swift-riding men enliven the road, and serve to insist on the dip of the ground, and to lengthen out the road to the eye. Lastly, the group of the boy, woman, and child dimly repeat, and certainly lift into the air the centre of the composition, the Martello Tower and its companion.

No. XXXV.

INVERARY PIER, LOCH FYNE: MORNING.

Drawn, Etched, and Engraved by J. M. W. TURNER.

INVERARY PIER is one of the plates Turner engraved as well as etched, and I wish a skilled mezzotint engraver would take the trouble of studying it, and give to us a better account than I can give of the way in which Turner used his tools. What was etched was very little; the hill on the left, the woods, the pier, the boats, and the sharp fluke of the anchor. The bird and post were afterwards introduced to give distance to the reach of water, as also were two of the distant fishing boats. The rest—sky, water, mountains, with the exception of a few faint outlines,—were left to be wrought out in mezzotint. And the whole of the engraving is a strange study. The sky has a multitude of scratches running hither and thither across it in a seemingly meaningless fashion. It is only after a time, and when we consider the sentiment of the sky, that we conjecture they are intentional and do their work. The curves on the upper left hand are not mezzotint left

behind by the engraver, but worked in at once—Turner using the engraving-tool like a pencil—a frequent practice in this plate. It is probably owing to this practice—a new experiment, as it were, in an art which a painter partly resented as mechanical—that the centre cloud is so disagreeably harsh in outline. It is plain, however, that Turner was fond of it and meant to draw attention to it as a chief part of his composition by pointing towards it the mast of the fishing boat below.

It will be seen that there are many pure white spaces in the sky, bordered by the faintest film of mezzotint. After a few impressions—as usual with these experimental engravings of Turner—this faint film vanished and the place where it had been appeared white. Immediately the whole plate was thrown into disorder. All the relations of tone, light, and shade were made inharmonious; and the same thing took place with the extraordinarily delicate engraving of the mountains and of the misty bar at their base. Hence, to re-establish these relations, the plate had again and again to be touched over with fresh mezzotint, and scarcely two impressions are alike. I do not understand how the surface of the furthest mountain at the entrance of the Loch has been worked, nor the little strip of hill behind the woody point on the left. The little strip seems as if it were done in aquatint, and the surface of the hill looks as if he had roughened the plate with sand, and then—in order to get a different texture—let the acid work upon that place. Another experiment!

The photograph ought to keep its ground white, in order, as much as possible, to retain the cold pure light of morning which fills the drawing. It does not glow, but it grows momently more radiant. It steals, like a visitor that is sure of welcome, round the edges of the hills, and whitens the waters of the bay. It is cold, but it sets all the fishermen to work. The air that comes with it is a "nipping and an eager air," but there is no wind. The folk are just awake, and no more. The calm is deep on the water and in the sky. The stones, the woods are as yet half asleep; only the mountains are fully aroused. There is scarcely a ripple even close in shore. The thin mist of the morning lies along the bases of the hills, and the fishing boats gleam pale through it, and shadowy. It is rising too among the mountain hollows and will float upwards invisible when the hot day comes, until in the highest region of the air it will chill into cirri like those already afloat in the upper sky. This is the sentiment of the piece, and Turner felt and enjoyed it greatly. As to the composition and work of the plate, those who do not feel its beauty, simplicity, power, and skill, will not feel it the more for words of mine. Here is the Northern morning, it seems to say, do you like it? And here are the men who belong to the Northern sea—do you feel with their life?

No. XXXVI.

FROM SPENSER'S FAERY QUEEN.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* T. HODGETTS.

THE "Faery Queen," they say, has been searched in vain to find the source of this subject. There is certainly no passage in that poem which describes a knight sitting on the ground and leaning his head in miserable thought upon his shield, while before him lie the abandoned shield and arms of another knight who has carefully piled them up like a monument before he has said his farewell to life. But I have always thought that Turner had in his mind, when he drew this place, the scenery around the cave of Despair described in the first book of the "Faery Queen." The abandoned armour has then belonged to a knight who has done himself to death, and the living knight, whose attitude is that of hopelessness, is one of those who, tempted by Despair, is now on the brink of suicide. The corpses that Spenser tells us lay round the cave are not in the drawing, nor is the cave itself seen, but Turner would seek, not to reproduce the poet's

description, but to paint the impression which the poet's story had made upon him.

And the landscape we have here is, I think, conceived from the stanzas which follow :—

Ere long they come, where that same wicked wight
His dwelling has, low in an hollow cave,
Far underneath a craggy cliff ypight,
Darke, doleful, dreary, like a greedy grave,
That still for carrion carcases doth crave :
On top whereof aye dwelt the ghastly owle,
Shrieking his balefull note, which ever drave
Far from that haunt all other chearefull fowle ;
And all about it wandring ghostes did waile and howle.

And all about old stockes and stubs of trees,
Whereon nor fruit nor leafe was ever seene,
Did hang upon the ragged rocky knees ;
On which had many wretches hanged beene,
Whose carcases were scattered on the greene,
And throwne about the cliffs. Arrived there,
That bare-head knight, for dread and dolefull teene,
Would faine have fled, ne durst approachen neare ;
But th' other forst him stay, and comforted in feare.

That darkesome cave they enter, where they find
That cursed man, low sitting on the ground,
Musing full sadly in his sullein mind ;
His griesie locks, long growen and unbound,
Disordred hong about his shoulders round,
And hid his face ; through which his hollow eyne
Lookt deadly dull, and stared as astound ;
His raw-bone cheekes, through penurie and pine,
Were shronke into his jawes, as he did never dine.

Here, then, before us, in the drawing are the "old stockes and stubs of trees," and, in the foreground and

through the strange-formed mountains, the ragged rocky knees; the craggy clifts; the leafless and fruitless stems on which many wretches had hangèd been; the ghastly owl, and the birds of prey. This is, I imagine, what Turner *saw* after he had read Spenser's description. It is a new episode, invented by the painter, in the history of the cave of Despair.

The mountains are conventionalized—if I may use that term—by the imagination to fit an allegorical land. They are outlined with grim severity; their sides—as smooth and precipitous as if they had been sliced downwards by an adze—made pitiless to fit the haunt of Despair; of grassless, treeless, blank, rigid rock, where even the lichen could scarcely find a crevice; and pushing forth at their promontories rounded bosses or ragged squared edges like "knees," a word of Spenser's which may have lingered in Turner's imagination when he drew these ghastly hills. Below, in the dark ravine, we are to imagine that there lies the corpse of the knight who stripped off his armour before he flung himself down the precipice; and the vultures are coming up the wind to banquet on him, while the carrion crow sits, already gorged, on the top of the withered pine.

The fierce storms that sweep down the valley have torn away the upper part of the rock-rooted pine on the right, and stripped away the bark and foliage of the other tree at whose roots the knight is sitting; nor have they less tormented the third pine, whose sinuous strength is wrought out inch by inch by the artist, and whose top,

in symbol of the horror and crying of Despair, ends like the open mouth of a dragon. A single branch is all this veteran that has outlasted the gales of Hopelessness can show of life and faith. The sycamore between, if it be a sycamore, has lived despite of storm, but rather serves the purpose of a mass of shade in the right place than any symbolic end; and the great burdock leaves in the corner are only inserted to serve the needs of the composition.

The descending branch of the broken pine on the right, sweeping downwards, and the headlong curve of the great rock behind the heap of armour, aid the imagination to create and deepen the ravine; while the faint mist seen rising on either side of this rock from the depths below serves the same purpose. The two naked pine stems, opening out like a U, put back into distance the encircling mountain range, the iron peaks of which are set against a horizontal strip of sullen light, grey as the locks of Despair. Above this ashen bar, the flat and heavy clouds, stretching out like prison walls and hemming in the valley, brood with a menace of hopeless misery. I speak of them in symbols, for they are symbolic. And over all the drawing, as in the soul of the anguished knight, there is dead silence.

PART VIII.

ISSUED FEBRUARY 1, 1812.

No. XXXVII.

WATER MILL.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* R. DUNKARTON.

THE ideal English peasant was unknown to Turner. He saw and always painted the real peasant: the poor, coarse, ghastly life; foul, disease-stricken, hopeless, yet enduring; unromantic, unless in the pathetic thought of those who look on him and know that he can rarely possess, from childhood till he enter the poor-house in his decay, one touch of romance or joy or pleasant ease. The pathetic sorrow for this sorrow was voiceless in Turner, but he expressed it by telling the rough and naked truth in the "pastoral" subjects of the Liber Studiorum. This is one of them, not "elegant pastoral" at all! This is *our* Arcadia, and here is an English Daphnis and Chloe, and their gay and happy dwelling.

For the place is inhabited, and those who live in it are as well sheltered as the wretched cow, the boards of whose shed have been torn away for firing. The mill was born old, and in decay ; built half of clay and half of wood, and began at once to fall. The beams are now worm-eaten, the plaster has dropped away, the windows are blocked with planks, the shed and the gable are propped up with ragged poles, and the old millstone lies against the wall, sunken in the wet mud, so wet, that it partly reflects the stone. The steps are broken that lead to and from the mill; the vegetation of the foreground is rank and wild, the dog is miserable, the horses gaunt and starved. The peasant who rides them to the watering is in rags, the woman who carries the sheaf—all she has gleaned with pain, and all the work the mill has to do this day—is worn with her bitter life; the children of the mill, who look at her with the indifference of their common misery, are idle and sickly, and the coat of one is made out of an old corn-sack. There is not one happy or redeeming element in the whole drawing, unless it be the smooth lawn and lake in the distance, and this element does not redeem, but enhances the misery.

Nature has no sympathy with man's sorrow, yet a certain sympathy arising out of Turner's mind has here stolen into her work. When he placed the thistles near the steps, he may have thought of the ancient curse, "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee," and it is these that chiefly grow in the life of the English peasant; and

the quantity of the herb of the field they eat is represented by the scanty bundle of corn the woman carries beneath her arm. In sympathy too, the trees on the bank are dwarfed, and the sky is sad and lowering. Of course, the sky is as inventive as it is full of knowledge. Light is pouring into it from the left, the light of a low and watery sun, and the trees behind the shed are fringed with its radiant vapour. The cumulus masses which are growing into form above pass downwards into long clouds full of heavy weather, while the slant lines of the shower already begun repeat in their sympathy the sloping roof of the miserable mill. Night is coming and thick rain, but these cannot make the place more wretched than it is.

The only pretty things in the drawing are the wood and water behind the mill, but they belong to another world where the gay children come down to the willows to feed the swans. The sole thing in order, and therefore pleasant to see, is the water-wheel. It has been tended, for it is the very life of the dwellers in the mill. Turner paints it carefully blade by blade. But the threaded water that falls from it is small; the mill has no work to do. That, however, did not prevent Turner from drawing the tiny falling of the stream with reverence for truth; and the only things he seems to enjoy, so delicately wrought are they, are the ripples and the reflections made in the pool by the descending water.

But first and foremost is the mill; we are isolated with its pathetic face. The very repetitions of the bank by the

broken steps, of the chimney of the mill by the head of the sluice, of its wall by the line of the pond, shut us in with its life, and conquer our thought. We must think of it alone, and of its misery.

No. XXXVIII.

HINDOO ABLUTIONS;

OR,

WOMAN AT A TANK.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* W. SAY.

IN this classical composition, to which Turner gave no title, he was thinking of the country around Rome, and it is full of the special sentiment, of the many unspoken thoughts he felt as he wandered among her ruins.[1] It is in the "grand style" of landscape, and in that style it can scarcely be bettered. The solemn sky, so full of dignified sadness, and spread above the distant hills, is kept pure throughout. No fancifulness intrudes into its quiet, nor is it disturbed by a single drift of cloud. Dark above, it is like a requiem over the ruin of a nation; but far below over the horizon it passes into gentle and soft shimmer-

[1] If anyone should wish to know how many and how grave his thoughts were at Rome, let him look at the engravings in Rogers' "Italy" and in Hakewill's "Italy."

ing light, and we seem to hear in it, not the mournful music of regret, but the hymn of the world's gratitude to Rome. Nor is the great tree less symbolic. It is a noble study in itself, not quite so true to Nature as the Stone Pine in *Hindoo Devotions*; but Turner thought less when he drew it of exactness to Nature than of his desire to give it the Roman force and majesty, and to spread its top so that it might seem to fill the whole sky and overshadow the whole earth. It is the image of the Empire of ancient Rome. The ruins of her mighty works lie below; the wide plain beyond was once filled with her villas and her temples, and the hills are the hills that still, in their mourning and beauty, look down upon her desolation. Is that the Tiber or the Anio that, touched with evening's glimmer, flows below? It is enough that it suggests the ancient streams. And who are those who like ghosts talk together and commune on the road? Cicero and Atticus? It may well be they, come back from where they speak with Vergil to see the well-remembered land in that light of evening which like themselves is neither sorrowful nor joyful.

> Vidi quattro grand' ombre a noi venire
> Sembianza avevan nè trista nè lieta.

Of the mere composition I say nothing; but is it not strange that Turner, so long the leader of the natural as well as of the romantic school of landscape, who even in his old age was, while true, at times sensational, and always the painter of his impressions—could thus when he liked

play upon the classic string to such excellent purpose? Even the oddity of the washing figure is not out of place. The solemnity of the whole picture, the historic ghostliness of the dream, lift her out of absurdity, and we fancy—when we are filled with the impression Turner meant to give—that she may have come out of Greece, and be the image of the world that, when it was conquered, took captive Rome, its conqueror.

No. XXXIX.

CRYPT OF KIRKSTALL ABBEY.

Drawn, Etched, and Engraved by J. M. W. TURNER.

TURNER not only etched but engraved this plate with his own hand, and the engraving is as curious a study as that of *Loch Fyne* or the *Mer de Glace.* When he had finished this etching, he did not at once roughen the whole copper over with the tool and then scrape and burnish it down to the light. He first used the roulette—a large toothed tool—over the foreground, the flat of the arch, and elsewhere, in order to have broad spaces of rough dark under the mezzotint, and thus to obtain what the water-colourists call texture. Then he scattered little clouds of mezzotint over the roof and walls, so that he might make the shadows and the play of light on them more various, when the full mezzotint was added. Again, at certain places, as for example in the shading of the cows, he put in at once all the mezzotint he wanted, just as an etcher adds shade to his guiding lines immediately. This is not the way an engraver would work: it is an artist making experiments with a new method. To give another instance, the shadow

on the central pillar and the three transverse lines at the top are done as a painter would do them with a brush. In fact, the effects sought are those of water-colour, not of mezzotint, and the finest of them perished after a few printings. The willows outside the window, the soft gradating of the central column, the delicate reflections of trembling light on the roof are never seen in any state of the plate except the first.

The slanting rays of the sun stream in on the left and strike across the crypt. But diffused light comes in on the right also through the windows, and it is with delightful skill that Turner has rendered the effect of this double light playing through the shadowy place. Both the direct rays of the sun and the soft radiance from the ruined window are concentrated on the bright pillar in the midst. It is the centre of the composition. To give it importance, the mass of cows forms, as it were, a base for it, and the cow behind it, kept white, throws it forth from the wall. Alone it seems to support the roof, yet the extraordinary delicacy of the engraving of its shaft makes it beautiful in the midst of its strength.

Indeed the whole of this piece of architecture gave Turner real pleasure to paint. He loved the place, the landscape and the Abbey he had watched one sunny day from the meadows of the Aire. He painted it again and again, and always with sentiment. And when he turned to draw it within as well as without, we feel that he was filled with the same pleasure. No mere architect could have made this drawing, no artist could have done it

without some passion in his heart. Turner has had sympathy with the laying of every block, and etched the capitals of the pillars and the corbels on the wall as if he had hewn them himself from the living rock. He felt that the masons loved their labour, put into it each his own thought, and while they carved in obedience to the master builder's plan worked also for their own hand. And the spirit of the old Normans filled him as he drew, and breathes in these stones. How firm the pillars rest and rise, how massive the roof's masonry, how closely knitted together, how fitted to bear the weight of the Church above! The place is small, yet looks—that triumph of architectural skill—much larger than it is.

The time is deep warm afternoon. The willows outside, almost lost to the eye in the hot haze that the sun has drawn from the watery meadows, deepen the impression of heat which the sheltering cattle first create; and the dark pool, in which the pillar is so quietly reflected, while it tells of the neighbourhood of the river, contrasts with and refreshes with its coolness the burning day. There is no human life here—only utter stillness and loneliness. But there is the remembrance and the sentiment of humanity. The cattle rest, and Nature pours her radiant light among the ruins of the work of man. But the building raised by belief and sacrifice and thought, for the worship of God and the repose of the faithful dead, is sacred no more to men. The dark pool rots beneath its roof, the dank weeds crawl around its pillars. Yet the sunshine loves it still.

No. XL.

SUNSET.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* W. ANNIS *and* J. C. EASLING.

PICTURE IN THE POSSESSION OF SIR JOHN MILDMAY.

THIS is a cold autumnal sunset. The sun is half veiled by thin vapour, but enough light remains to sparkle on the crests of the waves as they break on the beach. But most of this light in the foreground is due to the reflections from the clouds, and from the pure space of sky above. The sun—a frequent effect in Nature—has thrown back and aside the heavier clouds, and its rays from behind the straight mass of vapour on the horizon strike on their under and upper edges, on the wavelike and lighter clouds above, and on the sails and waves below. This suggestion of the sun throwing open the gates of heaven as he passes to his rest, is common with Turner. The composition of the sky is a reversed repetition of the composition of the lines of sea and shore of boats and waves below. It is this strange

arrangement which introduces an element of wildness, even of weirdness into the impression the picture makes.

There has been quiet, chill weather, but the wind has lately risen, and now storm is coming; and the thought of the tempestuous darkness at hand deepens the human anxiety which belongs to this sunset scene. We feel, as we look, that all things are vaguely troubled, seeking rest from labour, hasting homeward from the treacherous powers of night. Nature herself seems to sympathize with man's desire for shelter, escape, and peace. The sun drops into his ocean bed. The very wave is tumbling in to finish its life. The seamen drive their fishing boats to shore. Wife and child run to receive them, and the baby in the mother's arms sees and welcomes its father. Others have beached their boat, and talk, and rest beside it. The fisherman with the net is going home. The fishing boat yet out on the darkening sea increases the impression, through contrast, by its loneliness and unquietude.

This then is one of the few of the Liber Studiorum which is full of gentle, not tragic sympathy with simple and kindly humanity. The note is low and sad like the evening, but it is none the less tender. And perhaps Turner used his anchor to show that all life is anchored best in labour which can return to a well-loved home.

Much might be said of the splendid drawing of the wave on whose crest the boat is being beached. Those who have seen the thing will know its truth. The sails and masts of the lugger seem to spring forward to the

shore, and Turner has exaggerated their rake forward on purpose. Throughout the composition repetition and contrast reign, for peace and movement have both to be suggested. The mother and the running boy are intended to repeat the boat and its forward rush, and to harmonize with them; but the sharp curve of the anchor towards the right meets in contrast the rise of the lugger's bow, and its fixity increases the swiftness of the rush of the lugger. The same contrasts and repetitions, much disguised, may be seen in the boat drawn up on the shore and the massed casks and timbers set in opposed lines on the left hand of the picture; but on that side all is rest, as on the other all is movement. The tall thin mast, like the figures on the shore, gives distance to the three divisions of the sea, and the two horizontal pieces of wood with the stones on the beach are to bind the two sides of the composition together. There are few of the Liber Studiorum in which Turner has made Nature more fully in sympathy with man.

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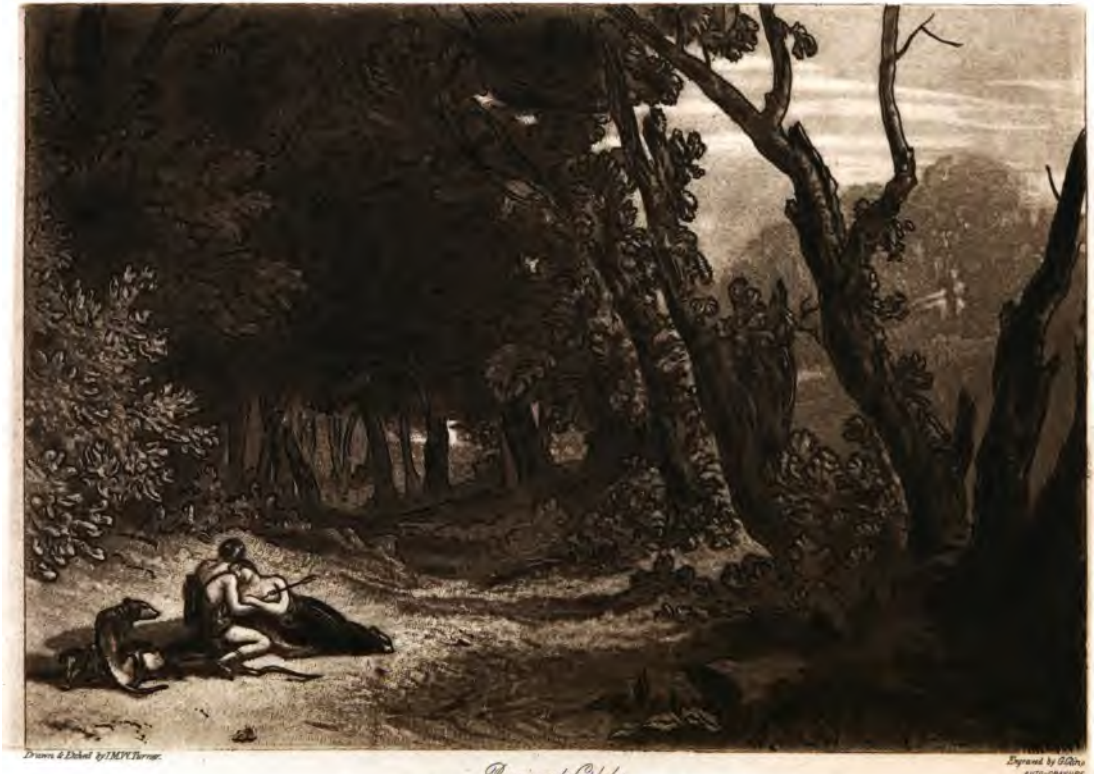

Drawn & Etched by J.M.W. Turner.

Engraved by G. Cooke
AUTO-GRAVURE

Procris and Cephalus.

Published Feb. 14. 1812 by J.M.W. Turner, Queen Ann Street West

No. XLI.

PROCRIS AND CEPHALUS.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* G. CLINT.

OF all the woodland studies of the Liber Studiorum *Procris and Cephalus* is the simplest and perhaps the finest, and it is mingled up by Turner with fateful love and the passion of death, over which, as if in pity, the trees depend. The forest glade in which Procris lies dying resembles the choir and apse of a Gothic church. From side to side the trees slope upwards to interlace their branches nearer and nearer together, till the arched roof closes in above a little rising of the grove, and two tree-stems stand like the easternmost pillars of the woodland chapel that becomes, as if in prophecy of death, dimmer and darker to its end. But on the dying of Procris Nature pours through the stems of the grove on the hill the evening light which fades as fades the life of Procris,—in satire or sympathy, who can tell? At least, if this be sympathy, the freshest and brightest foliage in the whole of this book, the young abundant life of Nature, seems on the left

above the dogs, to mock with its radiant boughs the human sorrow.

It is not quite a solitary forest place, for it lies on the outskirts of the forest, where the ruts made by the cart of the woodcutter strike across the foreground; but it is still enough unfrequented to allow the ground to keep its ridge and flow, and beautifully and with exquisite skill and complication is it broken. It appears to be the work of Nature herself. Yet there is not a line of it which is not of value to the composition, and its disposition is interchanged so skilfully that it is an abstract of Nature's variety. Nor is there any sameness in the trees. The stems and branches seem to be filled with their own wild will, yet the slope of every trunk is accounted for by the lie of the ground, and the manner of the growth of every branch might be explained by the mutual yielding of each to each as year by year they move together, living and dying for one another. And nowhere in the whole of the Liber Studiorum has Turner better represented that in which he excelled—the mystery of interwoven foliage with dark and subtle-shifting reflections,—while in the green roof, through two open spaces, the sunset shines in like twin eyes of light on the tragedy below, and illuminates the arch of foliage with its sad and spiritual fire.

The slant upwards of the trees on the right of the glade—lest it should be monotonous, or the artifice of the arch be too soon felt,—is opposed by several trees whose trunks and branches lean the opposite way. This

is most apparent in the nearest of all the trees, the stem of which, as it were in violent opposition, stretches away at a sharp angle to the right. Its absence would spoil the composition; and the angle it forms with its companion throws into distance the grassy hill behind, as the double angle of the second tree makes the eye feel how far the sky retreats.

The composition of the figures and dogs is repeated by the outline of the bank above them, and indeed by the general outline of the whole composition of the woodland—even to the arrow in the breast of Procris which slopes to the right with the same intention as the slant of the tree. The dogs again repeat, with sufficient change, the lines of the composition of the figures; and the shadow that stretches behind them binds them into one with the figures and lies around them like the shadow of death. Turner has made these dogs without sympathy with their master's sorrow. They seem only to be used as material for composition. But he was not incapable of feeling the sympathy of the animals with man. On the contrary, and again and again in his work, the dog mourns for or with his master, or plays and rejoices with him.

I need not dwell on the solitary charm of the place. It has all the mystery of Nature and some of its silent mockery of our desire to understand her secret; and the sky, with those bars of clouds of which Tintoret was so fond when he painted death or sorrow on the earth below, adds to the impression. There are places, into

which when we intrude at certain hours of the sky and air, we feel as if we had broken in on the celebration of mysteries by the Nature deities, and were in danger of death for the violation. It may be that Turner meant to convey this feeling, and in his unconscious way felt for it in this drawing.[1] It is at least that impression which it makes on me.

[1] I have received the following letter, so interesting that I am glad to insert it here :—

"DEAR SIR,

"Will you kindly forgive my asking, with reference to your note on the 'Procris and Cephalus,' whether there is anything that makes it necessary for us to regard the scene as a sunset? Mr. Ruskin, like you, regards the light as fading. But if that is Turner's meaning does he not miss the point of the story which turns entirely on the rivalry of Procris with Aurora? It was jealousy of the rosy-fingered goddess that brought Procris to the spot, and it would be a curious infelicity to represent her as having come in the evening. I cannot help thinking, though anyone may well hesitate to differ from Mr. Ruskin, that Turner meant to represent the dawn. Nor do I think he fails. The shaft of light that pierces the distant trees seems to me to be aimed at Procris and to terminate, as it were, in the fatal arrow. Nor does the print as thus interpreted seem to me to lose any of its impressiveness. To my mind the tragedy is all the deeper when seen relieved against the freshness and innocent brightness of dawn. Faithfully yours,

"G. WEBSTER THOMSON,

"2, Rubislaw Terrace, Aberdeen."

PART IX.

ISSUED APRIL 23, 1812.

No. XLII.

WINCHELSEA, SUSSEX.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* J. C. EASLING.

THIS subject, the old tower near the gate of Winchelsea, appears again in the Liber Studiorum under the title of *East Gate, Winchelsea*. In that drawing we see the gate itself and the tower, but in this we have passed through the gate and stand at the top of the hill leading downwards into the plain. The same flock of sheep—for Turner is retentive of his memories—which in the other plate is passing round the gate, is seen here going down the hill. He had also, when he was at Winchelsea, seen soldiers on the march, for the drawing of the town in the "England and Wales" is filled with them. Of this sight of his we have here a reminiscence in the soldier who is talking to the woman by the wayside.

The tower, though of importance in the drawing, is not, however, the main thing that Turner wished to represent. The impression the drawing records is that Winchelsea was set on high above the sea and plain,

and the tower is there to tell us that we are on this height and near the gates of the town. Afterwards, every line and touch in the drawing carries us down the hill that Turner has chosen to make so steep. The soldier points to the plain below; the sheep-driver, who with his companions repeats the group of the soldier and woman and boy, does the same thing with his whip. The slope above the soldier descends rapidly to the brow of the hill. The bank with the trees on its ridge, and the sheep underneath, seem both to run downwards; and the trees towards the point appear to fall precipitously. This is greatly helped, even insisted on, by the bright light between the stems of the trees nearest the tower—the brightest light in the drawing—and by the fainter continuance of it along the ridge.

The sky is used for the same purpose. The clouds are horizontal on the left as far as the tower; they represent the flat space on which the town stands. But the moment we get to the tower the great cumulus begins to rise, and its outline repeats that of the trees on the ridge. Lower down in the sky an oblique line of cloud echoes the incline where the road begins to dip; and lower still, the slanting lines of shadow above the plain are parallel to the last slope of the bank. It would seem that this was intended, but it is more right to say that it was done by instinct. But whether intended or not, the result is produced. We are made to stand at the entrance of a town set aloft over the plain. And there, under this wide and varied sky, is the distant earth

below, wrought—and in how small a space—into a great expanse. The curving lines upon its surface which sweep round into the shadow; the horizontal lines which trend off to the right of the curve; the broad shadow itself; the dotted strokes of light one after another; the softly modulated edge of road along the far-off hill-side—each detain the eye, and when we reach the horizon, we have done so much work that we are convinced of the extent of the plain. Then, to finish all—to expand the flat surface and the sky and to deepen the descent—Turner hews in a bold foreground as a base for his two naked trees, and through their stems and branches makes us see in aërial perspective the sky and plain in all their lessening light and shade.

The tower, however, is not forgotten. Turner has thought of it as the last and sorrowful witness of forgotten days. Therefore it keeps its own quiet and pathos, and collects near it the brightest clouds in the sky to cheer its silent solitude. With it are a few broken walls, old friends to whom it may speak at nights. The soldier underneath it is in harmony with its warrior life, and by continuing its vertical line lifts it higher into the sky. And at last, as in the *East Gate Winchelsea*, Turner places beside it, to give it sympathy and cheerfulness, a gay young tree, a poplar with rippling leaves. It is like a gracious maiden who gives some hours of her youth to make an old man happier.

No. XLIII.

BRIDGE WITH GOATS.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* F. C. LEWIS.

THIS drawing was probably the first made, and certainly the first engraved of all the Liber Studiorum. It is the only one which is wholly done in aquatint, and Lewis, who wrought it, having disagreed with Turner about the price to be paid for of the second plate (*Chepstow Castle*), which Turner asked him to etch as well as engrave for the same money, was never employed again. Turner, having thus lost the services of the best aquatint engraver of the day, turned his attention to mezzotint, in which vehicle the rest of the plates (with the exception of two of their skies) were done. This was fortunate, for the effects obtained by mezzotint are incomparably more various, more rich, softer as well as more powerful, than those of which aquatint is capable. Moreover, Turner could never have given to the etched line, in combination with aquatint, the same power, freedom and even fierceness which he gave it when used

along with the deep and velvet ground which can be laid in mezzotint.

In this plate the etching is, in comparison with the others, scratchy, tentative, and weak. It was partly the thin and shallow vehicle of aquatint which compelled this unforceful line, but something is no doubt due to this being Turner's first experiment in etching combined with engraving. He did not yet see how much and how little might be done by the etched line, nor how a few strokes might do all the work he has here failed to do with a great many.

In the next plate that he etched (*Chepstow Castle*) his manner with the needle changed. The line is still unforceful; too thin, even feeble in the foreground; but he understood now how much he might leave to mezzotint, and how few etched lines, provided they were leading lines, he might use. Later on, force, edge, depth were given to the selected lines, nor was delicacy, where it was needed, lost.

Whether the landscape here is the record of a real scene, or invented from reminiscences of Italy, as it seems to be, it is at least thoroughly Italian. It might be a view from some point in the Alban hills near Nemi. The wooded slopes, gray with olives, crowned and edged with stone-pines and cypresses, that here descend from their castles and villas into the plain; the hills soft with mingled light and mist, the deep gorge crossed by the bridge, the heavy blocks of volcanic rock that build up its parapet, the scene on the road with goats and shep-

herds,—are seen every day by the traveller in the hill country near Rome. And the glowing sky, with the lordly Sun blazing in the midst and devouring all clouds save those lofty cirrus bars that he makes and unmakes momentarily, is Italy, and alas, not England.

The vast expanse of the Campagna, seen from this height, impressed Turner as much as the "green sea" of the waveless Lombard plain did Shelley. He loved, like Shelley, the endlessness, the multitudinous monotony of a great surface of earth, over which, to rob it of its monotony, the Spirits of light and shadow pursued each other. Like Shelley also, he excelled in representing such a plain, and he has had pleasure in this drawing. The massive parapet of the bridge is met in contrast by steep-descending arches, the vertical sides of which emphasize all the horizontal lines of the flat expanse beyond. A few etched strokes below lead the eye to see the plain opening from the gorge, like a fan expanding from its handle, an impression continually made on the wanderer in Italy. The immense breadth of sky suggests that the earth lies outspread, though unseen, on either side. The stone-pines on the ridge charm the eye for a moment, but when we descend into the Campagna, we find ourselves forced to pause again and again. Channels of rivers, low and broken hills, clumps of woodland, roads, ruins, make us feel how many miles we have to go before we gain the hills. The suggestive etching of this plain is good; every line, every scratch tells its tale.

This is the kind of thing Claude could not do, and the plate was done in rivalry with Claude.

The last volume of the Liber Veritatis had just come out when Turner began his book with this Print. Its deep and pervading sunlight is in emulation of Claude, and so is the massed composition of the trees and of the men and animals on the road. But it is just because it is work done in rivalry, and in the manner of his rival, that it is not successful rivalry. The imitation takes away some of Turner's individuality, and yet that individuality was so strong that it rises through the imitation. The drawing is then neither Claude nor Turner; not in the manner of one or of the other.

Again, Turner worked directly from nature, and while keeping natural truth, composed his objects—with special reference to beauty and its emotion, and to imaginative thought and its interest—into a picture. Claude can scarcely be said to have worked from nature, nor did he see clearly or care for natural fact, but he composed his properties into beautifully disposed masses, and with a view to awaken, through noble composition, an ideal pleasure. It was always a conventional idealism, having no secure basis of truth, and resembles the landscape of Pope, and when it is best, of Collins or Gray. But when we choose to look at it within the sphere of the painter's powers, and through the glasses of his time, it has its own beauty and charm, and it is seldom wanting in breadth, or indeed in dignity. And this is wholly independent of its greatest charm—the beautiful purity of the light—and

is of itself enough to give a certain amount of delight. But when Turner strove to reach this conventional idealism, he broke down. It was like Shelley trying to write in the manner of Pope. Look at the disposition of the trees on the right. Claude would have massed them in so impressive a way that they would have solemnized the whole. Turner breaks them up, and worries the eye, and does so because he is imitating. For he could mass things better even than Claude when he chose, when he was working from his own impulse.

Again, the road, the trees, figures, goats, bridge, and fortress are imitative of Claude, fairly disposed conventional properties. But the wooded hills, the plain, the hills are not imitative of Claude. They are Turner's own, and true to Nature. Half nature then, half convention; half Turner, half pseudo-Claude, the drawing is like a Gothic building with a Palladian porch, and as disagreeable. But nevertheless, the splendid curve of the bridge, and the noble way in which it is broken, its largeness, the disposition of the two goatherds with regard to the landscape, the hurry crowd and speed of the troop, and the graceful and studied arrangement of the plants and tree stems in the foreground in their relation to the bridge, are things of which Claude was rarely capable.

No. XLIV.

CALM.

Drawn, Etched and Engraved by J. M. W. TURNER.

THROUGHOUT the Liber Studiorum, so much interest is shown by Turner in the sea disturbed by wind, that we look with a pleased surprise on this plate dedicated to *Calm.* It is by no means one of the best of his representations of the sea at rest—far inferior, for example, to the *Scarborough* in the "Ports of England,"—but it records, in the midst of this book, the pleasure he took in deep repose. And the record is the more deliberate, because it is the quiet of an element which is only constant to restlessness. The calm, like that of Inverary Pier, belongs to the early morning, and this is characteristic of Turner's thoughtful humanity. For the greater number of the drawings which he consecrates to peace are lit by the rising or the setting sun. Between the childhood and the old age of the day are almost all his storms.

In this plate the "sun is rising through mist," and in many ways the treatment of the subject might be com-

pared to the picture in the National Gallery. As in that picture, the light here strikes upwards through the vapour on the clear heaven above, and touches the drifting cirri. The slight dip in the curtain of mist behind the sail of the hay-boat shows that the sun is just breaking from the horizon, and this story is still further told by the light which creeps from beneath the mist and shimmers on the water down to the bottom of the plate. Along with the haze there is calm. But I think there has been storm twenty-four hours before; and after the heavy rain the fishing boats that have sought shelter are drying their sails. It would be unlike Turner not to suggest contrast, and indeed peace is never profound which does not hold in it some thought of storm. Nor does he leave us to conjecture. A little touch makes us certain that there has been wind at work. Over the "oily calm" of the surface a wide low ripple is running in, such as is left long after the passage of a gale. This ripple breaks up all the reflections, as we see in the reflection of the oar, and continues them from ripple to ripple; and this continuity, this repetition, deepen the repose. There are faint puffs of wind, enough to fill the sails of the hay-barge, and to flap the flag of one of the boats. But the calm seems all the deeper for this languid movement. The sails droop as if in weariness, the men in boats and barge rest and chat idly, the ship in the offing rides to her anchor in the mist that lifts so slowly. The only things that move swiftly are the birds, and they are rejoicing in the quiet of the

air; while the upper clouds are those that belong to windless spaces of sky. As usual, Turner, like other artists, instinctively repeats his objects in order to make an impression of calm. The bows of the two central boats answer to one another, and so do the two oars aslant in the water. On each side of the central mass of boats there are two white sails, and then two dark ones; and many other repetitions may be observed in the plate.

The great mast in the centre wants no lifting, but the mast of the haybarge which is to carry the eye upwards to the loftier air and clouds would not do this work sufficiently were it not sent upwards by the buoy, the bird, the line of the rudder, and the men upon the hay. Distance is given to the barge by the white fishing-sail beside it and its reflection; while the curve of the large fishing-boat's stern, continued by the anchor and the man who is looking round the foresail, breaks pleasantly the rigid lines of the sail.

The plate is attractive, but it is not one of the nobler subjects, nor is it very successful as a piece of engraving. Turner engraved and etched it himself, and he never seemed to get it quite right. He etched it in different ways; the changes and patching of the etching can be detected underneath the present work. The boat in the foreground and its shadow have been re-bitten and re-engraved so often that the copper was dug into before the plate was issued, and it soon became rotten in this place. The sky is in confusion over the sails, and birds

had to be put in over the worn places of the plate. As to the finer work on the distant sails of the brig, on the hay in the barge, and in the sky, it departed almost immediately. It is characteristic both of Turner's knowledge and skill that when the sky became full of patches and out of harmony with the sea and ships, he recreated the whole plate and turned it from an effect of sunrise into that of a golden summer afternoon. This, which is sometimes called the fifth state, is a very luminous and lovely engraving, but too thinned-out to be satisfactory.

No. XLV.

PEAT BOG.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* G. CLINT.

OF the subjects taken from Scotland for the Liber Studiorum the *Peat Bog* is the most desolate. In *Inverary Pier*, the sea and the life the fishers live are represented wakening in the chill calm of morning spread upon the mountains; in *Inverary Castle*, the same life is at work in the wild afternoon when the gusty wind had risen to disturb the world. In the *Ben Arthur*, the solitude of the mountain valley lies outspread under the storm-cloud. The sentiment of humanity is in it, but no human figure enters into this sanctuary where Nature is alone, none walk beside its stream. Our only companion is the "silence that is in the lonely hills." In the *Blair Athol* it is quiet also, but it is the scenery of the secret and gentle glen, and in it is the fisherman. *Dunblane Abbey* and *Norham Castle* are drawn so as to fill us with thoughts of the ancient religion and the war-romance of Scotland. The compassion and the beauty of the soft sunset light

are poured over them by Turner, and the daily life of the people still goes on beneath the shadow of the Cathedral and the Castle. In *Solway Moss* we realize the wild Nature and the wild life which belong to the Border and created the Border ballads; and the story is told of the bitter labour of men against the savagery of the earth and sky. But in these, at least, there is movement and excitement. It is not dull, hopeless, worn-out poverty, struggling for miserable life. It is *that* which Turner has recorded in the *Peat Bog:* and profound must have been his impression of it, for of all the wretched figures in the Liber Studiorum, these are the most battered, torn, and tortured by their fate.

But, as usual when the men and women in his subject are poor and miserable, he encompasses them with a magnificent scenery in the sky. He has done the same in the *Water-Cress Gatherers* and elsewhere, and I do not know whether he has created this dramatic interest in the heavens simply for reasons of art, or in sympathy with the suffering of man, or in the dumb anger he often felt with the fate which smote the poor so hard. He painted according to his temper. In the *Water-Cress Gatherers* his temper was sad and indignant, but in this drawing the temper in which he thought of the peat-gatherers was not altogether sad. He may have felt that there were elements in the life of the Highland poor—strength of soul, rugged intelligence, faithful imagination—which redeemed its misery; and, so feeling, have made the storm to pass away and the rainbow to enlighten the mountains.

The rain is just leaving the great hill on the right; and the very moment is given. The vapour is still rising so thickly and incessantly that the edges of the rainbow are not sharp, but blurred; and above it the last rearward clouds of the storm-rain are winnowed and blown forward by the wind. The whole of this right shoulder of the hill is steaming with scattered vapours, broken up with lights. The sunbeams striking on such a surface will be reflected partly by the rising vapours when they are thin, partly by the faces of wet rock, and generally by the rain-drops lying everywhere upon the heather; but where the rising vapours are thick, there will be shadow underneath them. It is this varied and multitudinous effect of light and dark, produced during the moment of transition in the storm, that Turner urged his engraver to succeed in representing. As fine in engraving is the body of the rain-cloud; and its truth to Nature is supreme. Few things pleased Turner more than the trailing and wind-driven clouds which precede the storm like dishevelled locks of hair, and which in heavy masses like falling and waving curtains accompany the storm's departure. He has drawn the latter here in departure as he drew the former in the *Slave Ship* in approach. Over the darkest part of the hill the weight and volume of the prone-descending rain is tremendous—so tremendous that the fierce gusts of wind scarcely curve its centre forwards. But they curve it enough to force it to fall at its base in tasselled forms divided from one another by the varying densities of

different portions of the cloud. Further on, we see that the gusts—for the sky cannot be explained unless we think of the wind as coming, not steadily, but in broken gusts—have driven a mass of rain forwards in a slant. It is exactly like a waterfall springing from a narrow gorge. And it descends like a waterfall, spreading out towards its base, curved into loops in the midst; and Turner, to add to this impression, has inserted two points of light, which are in it like rocks in a cataract round which the water has leaped outwards and downwards. This is a frequent effect in a rain-storm when there is light in the sky.

Further on, over the far hills, is the main body of the retreating storm—steady and massive rain, whose flat surface is dimly altered by the varying light. Below it, and now left by it, are the hills, their edges clearly drawn; and, with exquisite truth to fact, all their ridges and hollows are marked out by the white mists which during the clearing of a rain-storm on a warm day are sure to rise from the hill sides and to cling to the outlines of their rocks.

But perhaps the finest piece of imagination and of engraving is where the demon-heads of the great cloud, almost transparent in the light, and so wet through and through that they look like sponge, look forth from their place of vantage over the storm they govern and over the landscape they have condemned to their anger. They are the heads of the evil spirits of the storm, such as his was who took order with the body of Buonconte:—

"E mosse il fumo e il vento
Per la virtù, che sua natura diede.
Indi la valle, come il dì fu spento,
Da Pratomagno al gran giogo coperse
Di nebbia; e il ciel di sopra fece intento
Sì che il pregno aere in acqua si converse."

Of the "evil Will"—quel mal voler—who in Dante's conception caused the rain-storm near Pratomagno—I have often thought when I looked at these heads of cloud, and seemed to see, in one of them at least, the features of a wicked face. Nor would it be at all apart from Turner's imagination to instinctively have this thought, and unconsciously to form it. It is suggested to those who see this engraving, as it has frequently been suggested to the imagination of all the early peoples who battled for life with the Northern tempests. In almost all Teutonic poetry we are told of the witch faces in the storm-clouds, and of the vision in them of the evil powers who flung the lightning and the hail, and sent the deluge down.

Below this wonderful sky are the rude hillocks, glacier-rounded, through which the mountain road runs. They are etched with great care and knowledge, and the road—being flat and holding the rain—is lit by reflected sunlight. In deepest shadow of all is the heart of the drawing, the bleak bog, the embodiment of all the ghastliness of the place. The rain may go, but the evil darkness of the morass remains. Turner has etched it across and across with fierce cuts, as he has etched the deadly pools in the *Rizpah* and *Jason* near which lay the

skeletons and lurked the dragon. It is the Python's home—the source and haunt of corruption and disease—and the fire points out its horror and manifests its deathfulness. On its edge, and digging into its sides for fuel, are the miserable dwellers of the place, ragged, worn with hunger and with labour, and their horse a skeleton. But they are touched with the sunlight and the rainbow.

No. XLVI.

RISPAH.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* R. DUNKARTON.

WHEN Rizpah, daughter of Aiah, heard that all her children were slain and hung on high, she went forth and took them down and laid them on the earth, and kept her ghastly watch by them, suffering neither the birds of the air to touch them by day nor the beasts of the field by night; and it was the time of barley harvest when she did this thing. It is strange that this tragic story has not more seized on the imagination of artists, for in it horror and maternal love are so woven together that the love purifies the horror and the horror dignifies the love. And few imaginative situations can be more lonely, terrible, tender, and passionate than this woman's watch by night among her dead—all loved, and all destroyed.

It is curious to see how Turner has treated it. Nothing can be more unambitious, nothing more apart from what is called the grand style. There is no coquetry with the subject, no dramatic posing in the figure of Rizpah. He

has seen his image of the thing with his own eyes, and put down with absolute naturalism that which he has seen. And it is through his faith in the reality of what he saw, and his determination to get it into simple and clear form, that he has, in spite of his rude and uneducated conception of the sorrowing woman, reached a certain grandeur in the whole result. It was out of his power to make the figure of Rizpah beautiful with the beauty of great tragedy. But through simplicity and directness he has made her as weird as if her sorrow belonged to the childhood of the world.

But when his hand began to work in that realm of landscape which he knew and loved—he reached sublimity. He has subjected Nature to his vision of the thing, and made her image the passion and horror of the woman's heart. The "round-topped and awful trees" with the last lights of sunset burning between their stems and leaving to the darkness the lonely mother; the thin and misty crescent of the moon with the stars in the pale flat sky, barred with those horizontal clouds which Tintoret always hangs over the suffering of Earth; the broken mass of ill-grown trees and tormented brushwood on the right, and the one tree, stripped of nearly all its leaves, which hangs over Rizpah as if weeping for her; the barley half cut upon the hill, and left by the harvesters who have feared to help the desolate woman; the black and ghastly dwarf-wood which under the rocks collects the gloom of its recesses over the pond; the blacker pond, stagnating in its own darkness, whence the

ghosts of the murdered house of Saul might rise; the fierce reflection of the moon below, as bright as the torch of Rizpah; the dull and sodden clay on which the corpses lie; the bat which whirls and wheels, and is lit by the moonlight; the lion couched above and watching, but not daring to approach the mother's torch; the vultures which fly towards the dead through the sky—all this is conceived and wrought with equal force and imagination. And when we have seen it all, *then* the figure takes into itself nobility. She sits among all she loved, her face veiled in unutterable grief, careless of the wild beasts, ready for any fate for fate has done its worst; like an Indian woman,—for the conception is savage,—amid the graveyard of her tribe; her head on her hand which presses her burning eyes and brow, and the torch held forth in the other in childish faith that it will keep far off the beasts and birds of prey. What is within, Turner is unable to tell. Like Agamemnon's head when Iphigenia was slain, hers is veiled. And around her lie the half-covered corpses of her slaughtered children, laid piteously together. And at the fleshless feet of one, the crown of the house of Saul.

PART X.

ISSUED MAY 23, 1812.

No. XLVII.

HEDGING AND DITCHING.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* J. C. EASLING.

HEDGING AND DITCHING would be a better drawing, but I say this with diffidence —if the white cumulus cloud which seems to me to distress it were taken away and the unbroken roof of the sky to the left extended over the whole, leaving only the low white line upon the horizon. The drawing would then be of the same sentiment as that which fills the picture in the National Gallery of "The frosty morning melts before his beam." For the time of year of this subject is late autumn, and a light frost is setting in as the sun in the afternoon declines. Were the heaven spread all over with a flat, compressed mass of vapour, of uniform texture and colour, such as often precedes a frost, the whole drawing might be more at unity with itself; and the ground is

sufficiently broken and varied to permit of monotony in the sky.

This is one of Turner's *English* Pastorals, and as usual it is a record of the squalid and poverty-stricken life of the peasant. Not one trace of the picturesque, not one touch of the sentimental are to be found in these figures. Their poetry is only in the stern reality of their misery. Turner represents them crippled with rheumatism, bound for a bedridden old age, without imagination, without comfort, without hope. The poor wretch with the bill-hook will soon work no more. The two men digging out the tree are more like North American Indians than Englishmen; and the woman—that is Turner's idea of the finer sex in the country districts! It is impossible to mistake the artist's meaning—he meant to tell the fact that the life of the English peasant was miserable. Pastoral after Pastoral records it. It is his message, and grimly he has told it, saying nothing, but painting the truth.

But the patient work of poverty has a pathetic power over the imagination, and Turner has felt the worth of its patience. Rough and coarse as the figures are, they are not vulgar. They are of the earth, and have the dignity of the earth. Slowly, steadily they toil, and the place of the tree they are now uprooting will before long be ready to feed the flocks, or to grow the food of man. But they who uproot the tree will share its fate. They are withered, gnarled and gray, and when they are cut down by the woodman Death, will

be as forgotten as the pollard they destroyed. But they had strength while they worked, and the English sturdiness. And in this also the willow is their image. The long past in which it patiently grew into power, the lifeless ruin it has become, are both recorded in the drawing. The bark has been stripped away, so that we can follow all along the trunk the sinewy strength of its interwoven fibres, the upgrowth of its knotted branches and the hollowing of their decay. There is not a truer and mightier piece of etching in the whole of this book.

The copse behind is a faithful transcript of the edge of many a thinned woodland in England, and the sheep are disposed with Turner's usual art. Both groups on either side of the withered tree feed towards the point of the grassy space, and by following its outline enlarge it. The foreground is skilfully broken up, and tells in every line of it of the rich loamy soil of which it is made. The road beyond, deeply rutted, the fields and low trees, are characteristic of a country of heavy clay. The landscape is in harmony with the peasants. Its low dull lines are repeated by the pale bar of light and by the edge of the cloud above. The life of the earth and sky is as slow and laboured, as half dead as the life of its indwellers.

No. XLVIII.

CHEPSTOW CASTLE.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* W. ANNIS.

HEPSTOW CASTLE is set, in this drawing, on its lofty bank over the Wye, and as in *Raglan* and *Norham*, Turner has marked his sympathy with its ruin and with its departed power by placing behind its shattered wall and pouring through its broken windows the peaceful light of a summer evening. The sun has dropped down to its setting; the glory of the castle is gone; but they have had their day, and both, in passing away, preserve a beauty that is filled with peace. All things have ceased to work. The cattle are at rest, the barge has hauled down its sail, and the men lazily let out their net; the workmen, released from the day's toil, are bathing in the warm river; the trees stand still in the windless air; the very clouds have gone to sleep. It is the poet's "all golden afternoon."

The centre of the drawing is the Keep of the castle, and it is shown uplifted against the open space of sky

which the brightness of the sun seems to have made bare of clouds, though we see that in reality it is crossed with a number of fine bars of vapour. The clouds on the left, bending in varied masses upward, are tossed, nearest the castle, into two upcurving lines whose under edges, lit by the sun, serve still further to isolate the Keep in the imagination. But, while thus beloved by the heaven, it preserves its rule over the earth. Like *Norham Castle*, it over-lords the river, and Turner may have placed the barge below to make us remember that all the merchandise that passed up the stream of old was made to pay toll by the great earls. And, to deepen this impression of governance, he has made the ramparts of the castle as they march onwards to the point of the cliff rise like portions of the cliff itself, till, having masonried the last wall downwards like a precipice, the whole building stands forth undisputed master of the winding of the Wye.

Regret in the quiet evening for the ruin of Chepstow's work and splendour, sympathy with its past—that is the sentiment in Turner's soul. And then he turned to the sentiment of the evening itself, and of Nature enjoying herself therein. And below the rifted ruin he has filled the cliff with the softest and loveliest foliage, subtly but keenly etched, full of reflected lights, instinct with ever-changing shadows that soon will deepen into darkness. Then, in order to make us happier by contrasted beauty, he has set on the right of the precipice a softly sloping bank which, at its edge low down above the

stream, is made more gentle by a delicate tree, as graceful as a girl. And the stream itself—Wye with its soft inland murmur—how quiet and how deep it flows! Silent like the evening, it is made more still by the fire burning in the barge, and the ripples that spread from the swimmers. The shadow of the Castle-keep serves, with the shadow of the man who walks across the shallow, to make the river deep in this world of evening dream. The disposition of the three figures widens it; and this added depth and breadth, creeping into our imagination of the stream, pass onward into our impression of the sunset hour, and make it more poetical. Nor does Turner's instinctive work leave any part untouched with the sense of calm. The distant hills slumber in the twilight, and the arrangement of the cattle and trees in the foreground, repeating the broken lines of the castle, increases the feeling of repose. *Datur hora quieti.*

No. XLIX.

CHAIN OF ALPS FROM GRENOBLE TO CHAMBERI.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* W. SAY.

THE love Turner had for the endlessness of Nature and the pleasure he had in rendering it are well shown in this engraving. The vast plain, outspread like a sea, and closed in by the Alps, peak mounting over peak, engaged his imagination, and he spent on the drawing of it all the cunning of his hand. The triangular hollow between the head of the rock and the vineyard gives depth to the beginning of the plain and prepares the eye for its expanse. The varied lines like furrows, the incidents of landscape by the roadside, lead us slowly on to the white spire in the centre where it rises among the houses and trees, among the broken lights and shadows of the town. Beyond is the unbroken surface, and to give it greater extent, the fire is put in, with its wandering smoke divided by belts of gloom, on each of which we rest for a moment. Then dark bands of foliage cross the expanse from side to side, till near the mountains they become

only dotted lines, and each of these detains our mind. Below the mountains, a river of light seems to pour forth from the valley and to wash their foundations, and this also serves to set the plain into relief and to spread it forth to right and left.

After the immensity of the plain, we are brought among the energy of the mountains. They rise and heave, range after range, till they are clothed at last with the perpetual snow. From the mountains we climb the infinite of the sky, from one sunlit stair to another, till we reach the zenith, whence, to give the last touch to the vastness of earth and heaven, two ladders of light are let down to the outstretched fields below. Through these, and it is the last artifice that creates the distance, the sky, the hills, and the plain are seen as through a transparent and shimmering glass of air. Turner has drawn, not the chain of Alps and Grenoble, but his impression of the immeasurableness of Nature.

Meanwhile, in the foreground, the vineyard is a failure. But the gaiety of the vintage was pleasant to Turner, and its sunny human labour. The great plain had filled his heart, and he was happy. The mountains, where toil was hard and rude, were far away from the joyous vintage; but Turner felt their power over the human life of the plains, and he drew them near enough for those who looked up from the vines to receive their daily teaching of grandeur, of judgment, of purity, endurance and awe.

No. L.

MER DE GLACE, VALLEY OF CHAMOUNI, SAVOY.

Drawn, Etched, and Engraved by J. M. W. TURNER.

THE print was etched and engraved by Turner. The mezzotinting has the same character as that of *Inverary Pier*, that is, it is put in, as it were, in washes of colour, and not in the manner of an engraver. Far finer effects are attempted with mezzotint than it is able to continuously convey. For example, the faint and tiny clouds of mezzotint on the wall of ice-pinnacles which cross the glacier in its midst vanished altogether after a few impressions, and left the plate smooth in this place and the ice pure white. Then also, the passage of cliff and cloud in sunshine which fills up the background, and which is as delicate as if it were done in the faintest water-colour, did not remain the same in a single impression. That misty mingling of cloud falling over the icy cliffs like thin water and of sunshine gleaming through it and on the slopes of ice; the dimly pencilled shadows on the snow peaks which define their rocks; the

sharp slanted lights where the glacier turns towards the Col du Géant; the long sun-rays which glance down the side of the Aiguille de Charmoz, were all as short-lived as they were true and beautiful, and a print in which they are still clear is as rare and as precious as a fine gem. Turner, it is true, watched over his plate as it decayed, and continually worked in new mezzotint; but he never could regain the first effects, and at last he left it as dark throughout as if the glacier were seen at the approach of night. Even the snow mountain vanished, and was replaced by heavy clouds.

But the etching always lasted, and no wonder. The line, especially among the ice, is deep hewn into the copper, and of the same breadth throughout, as if the immensity of Nature's work and power in this place demanded a primæval outline. The etching of the opening crevasse on the left, of its edges, and of the blocks that are sinking into it, is as savage and grim as the place itself would seem at night to a lost traveller. All over the glacier the line is iron in its force. It is not so broad and fierce among the aiguilles, but even among them it is hewn down with a determined strength, as if Turner wished us to feel how rigidly and keenly frost had split the granite into peaks, and thinned these into needles. And the impression we receive from this tremendous etching, made more gigantesque by the exceeding delicacy of the mezzotint behind it, is that which we receive from the scene itself when, in the falling evening, the mountains and the ice stream between them are the embodiment

of cold and cruel desolation; of silent and relentless power irresistibly advancing to destroy. The enormous force with which the mass of ice in the foreground seems to be heaved upwards and forwards is Turner's representation of the impression he had received of this vast and reckless power. It is like an effort of Nature herself.

The aiguilles on either side have no real resemblance to their originals; nor does the glacier, as seen here, represent the surface of the Mer de Glace which is more than a mile wide at this very place. The drawing is a generalization of the impression Turner has received when, crossing the glacier, he stopped on the edge of a hollow of the field of ice to look upwards, out of the shadow in which he was, to the sunlit peaks and ice beyond the Aiguille de Charmoz. But he saw clearly, and drew accurately, the ice near at hand—the huge mass whose upper curve is like that of an incoming and just-breaking wave, but whose fractured side is curved like a shell—the ice at his feet waving like the swell of the sea—and the parallelism of the glacier ridges which run along and break off downwards like a mountain range. All this is drawn with the greatest truth to Nature, and small details are also not forgotten; the dark semi-concave hollow in the great shoulder where stones and sand have lodged and caused the surface to melt, the transported block below, the banded structure of the ice. He has even managed by a quaint use of the engraving tools to represent the ice as full of small stones and sand.

Right and left of this foreground, which fills the lower part of the drawing from end to end, he wishes us to conceive of the glacier as extending for more than a mile to the rocks on the right-hand side. He has tried to give us this impression by making the pine slopes and the aiguilles distant and small—but he has not succeeded, he has not told us how broad the glacier is. We only see what he meant when we look at the print in a dim light and at a distance. Perhaps Turner intended us to do so, for it was the light in which he saw this portion of the glacier. But his ill-success may also have been due to the partial failure of the copper on which he worked, a failure to which we owe the introduction of the two birds. They ought not to be there, but they filled up two holes in the copper.

LI.

RIEVAULX ABBEY.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* H. DAWE.

TURNER treated Rievaulx Abbey in the "England and Wales" series of drawings. Rievaulx is the first of them, and he has painted the Abbey enthroned at the head of the vale, encompassed by the sheltering hills, and below, the wide pastures that once fed the herds of the monastery, and the stream that running through its gardens watered the meadows and the groves where the dependent farms had each their homestead. Ruined as it is, the Abbey seems, as we look, to become that which it was of old; so nobly is it placed, so much does it seem to be the temporal master and the spiritual centre of the valley. And the whole drawing is the image also of that sentiment which led the Cistercians to place their refuged religion in lonely and well watered places, apart from the world but always beautiful, as if in their souls, as not in the Benedictines, there was a love of peaceful and happy scenery.

In the Rievaulx of the Liber Studiorum there is none of this feeling. It is, like *Holy Island* Cathedral, a study of architecture. But unlike the plate, the Abbey here is drawn by Turner as if he had no love of what he was doing; and since he drew pointed architecture of all kinds, both in France and England, with knowledge and love, delight and delicacy, it remains a puzzle to me why this Early-English abbey and Dunblane are, in comparison with the Norman buildings in the Liber Studiorum, so poorly drawn. The great transept windows are certainly set forth with nobleness, but Turner's hand was not thinking with his work when he etched the choir and its arches. That is the choir we see; the nave is entirely destroyed. The sunlight falls fully on it, and Turner, as usual, felt sympathy with its historical dignity. It fills the eye; and he dips the ground on either side to an angle in the midst that he may give it importance, and at the same time lift the transept free on the hillock, till it boldly claims our regard. The figures on the grass beneath the soft waving trees suggest the peace which steals on those who visit the lovely solitudes of Rievaulx, but this impression of quiet is the only sentiment in the drawing. It is perhaps enough; but it is not supported by the rest; and the subject remains only architectural. Even the sky has little interest. It might have been washed in by a mere draughtsman.

PART XI.

ISSUED JANUARY 1, 1816.

LII.

SOLWAY MOSS.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* THOS. LUPTON.

THE sky-scenery of this famous engraving is of a kind frequently seen on the Border near the Solway Firth. I used to think its strange cloud fury too sensational. But one day I saw the very like of it as I looked from a Cumberland hill towards the Solway Firth. Out of the west, and into a clear sky, there rose suddenly from the sea a massive cloud, which growing dark purple as it climbed the sky and congregating after it roll on roll of angry vapour, swept over half the sky, leaving the other half, over Scotland, bright and pure. The lightning flashed from its edges, and as I looked at the body of the cloud, it seemed to writhe and whirl, as if the thunder-spirits that dwelt in it were all at war.

And at war they were. Clouds within the storm-cloud were piled up, now in one place, now in another, in un-

equal volumes, and these, as the battle went on, were torn to pieces. All along the under edge the vapour was ravelled out like tangled hair; while, from time to time, great masses of mist were flung upwards out of the body of the cloud in the fiercest and most sudden way, as if there were local storms within the storm.

These strange things were partly caused by the action of two opposing winds. The thunder-cloud was driven by a west wind. Along the surface of the earth an east wind was blowing, and this wind flying up against the west wind in the thunder-cloud not only drove portions of it upwards, but also tore away and carried off parts of its under edge which afterwards fell in slanted rain under the power of the eastern blast. Tormented thus by the wind within itself, and by the wind without, both blowing contrary ways, the cloud resembled a mass of huge serpents, inextricably convolved, that now outstretching, now coiling together, now heaving upwards and then falling, moved at every point, but always as a whole moved forward. This I saw, and it is the very aspect of Nature that Turner has here recorded.

That day also, as in the engraving, I could look away under the storm-cloud into clear sunlit sky and pure distance, in which the pale outlines of the hills were distinct and delicate, and the Solway gleamed like silver. There were no mountains near at hand, for I looked north, and Turner is looking south towards Criffel; but had I been where he was, near those dark hills on the right, I should have seen the clouds, as in this drawing,

caught, collected, stayed among the mountains. When the thunderstorm had exhausted itself it would have settled down into thick and windless mist of rain.

Turner has drawn the beginning of this new business of the elements. The cloud is breaking up; its layers descend and enter the valley. They gather thick and black above the long low hill the curve of which is so beautiful, darken it, soften it, but blot out all its detail. Then, lest it should seem dull, Turner gives it life by the waving line of grey smoke blown along it by the wind. But this trembling line does other work. Its reflection, taken up again and again by the wet surface, brings life and light into the darkest recesses of the Moss.

It is this extraordinary sky with its sharp contrasts of dark and light, and with its multitudinous story, which Turner opposes to the flat monotony of the morass. But interesting as the sky is, the Moss is his real subject, and he has taken even more pains with it than with the clouds that overhang it. The whole of its history on this day is told. It has been so drowned in the heavy rain of the past night that all of it, heath, hummocks, reeds, and pools, reflects and takes shadows over its surface, as if it were nothing but water. Not only the smoke of the fire is reflected and the changing darkness and light of the clouds, not only are the shadows of the far-off cattle and men cast into it, but, by a wonderful skill of engraving, the whole of the level surface shimmers like a lagoon, opens out, and spreads abroad towards the mountains, like a lagoon that widens into the sea. This effect of

distance made by reflection is added to by Turner's way of arresting the eye, as it travels, by new matter. There are white spaces of water, shaped like spear-heads, free of reeds, where the eye is forced to pause. In one place, under the black lines descending from the cloud, the water under this local torrent of rain is flashing up in spray—and again the mind is stayed. The dotted etched lines which run across do the same kind of work. The sweeping curve backwards and forwards of the thin path, and the lessening crowd on it of drivers and cattle draw out the distance, and this distance is further insisted on by the clear etched outlines of the trees—the outlines only seen against the whiter light—on the verge of the Moss. In these many ways we are interested, detained, surprised, and wonder, like the drivers, when we shall get to firm land! Finally, Turner made in the foreground where the water-plants stand and spread in the black water, a statement of the condition of the whole Moss, in order that we might add what we see there to every part of its surface.

Turner felt the supernatural sentiment which lingers in all Teutonic countries around the treacherous morass. And he expresses his sense of this mystery and deadliness in the fierce darkness under the low hill where the evil in-dwellers of the marsh of old abode, and sucked in mortal men. But the real sentiment of the picture collects around the heavy labour of men in storm and through the dangerous places of the earth. What he loved to think of, and what was first in his mind, was

the long, long years of man's voyaging over this perilous path, from the days when the cattle-lifters of the border had driven their prey north and south across the Moss,[1] to this day when he heard the Scotch drover shouting to his cattle, and saw the cattle themselves spread out with all the joy of deliverance over the dry land. More than the storm-cloud, more than the horror of the morass, was the romance of this to Turner, and he drew the dark coils of the one, and the grim darkness of the other only as the frame to encompass and enhance this story of humanity.

[1] Not being able myself when I visited the Solway Moss to identify its scenery with that of the engraving, I appealed to Mr. Rawlinson, and have received from him the following interesting note, the use of which he has kindly granted to me :—

"Solway Moss is on the Cumberland side of the Border, close to Gretna Green, and clearly cannot have been the subject of the Liber print which passes by that name. It is really a view of the Solway and Criffel, taken from Lochar Moss, which is on the Scotch side, and is crossed by the railway from Annan to Dumfries, about three or four miles from the latter town. It may readily be recognized from the railway, but the point of view seems to have been taken from some rising ground half a mile from the railway on the shore side, where a road crosses the Moss towards the sea. It is about this place that the scenes of 'Redgauntlet' are laid."

No. LIII.

SOLITUDE.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* W. SAY.

ALTHOUGH this drawing—sometimes entitled *The Reading Magdalen*—has not much interest, and has never been a favourite with the public, it has the great manner, and if we begin to care for it, we pass on to caring for it in a distinctive way. Imagination belongs to it, and the power of awakening imaginative curiosity. What is that castle by the sea which sleeps in a mist of sunshine; who dwells in it, and looks forth from its ruined casements over this 'fairy land forlorn'; this land where only one woman lies on the grass, attended by a feeding stag? There are no ships on the sea, no birds in the sky, the stag is tame, but yet as lonely as its mistress. The two companions do not speak, and their companionship does not mar but soften still more the solitude.

If the woman be intended for the Magdalen, and if that is a skull which lies before her, then the introduction of the castle only makes the scene belong the more to

that country of legendary fancy where Romance and Christianity walked in the Middle Ages hand in hand; and the curious quaintness of the scene would arise out of that childlike naïveté in Turner's mind of which I have so often spoken in these notes.

The castle, the sea, the sky, the valley, the woman and the feeding stag are in the land of the Artist's dreams. The midmost group of trees is massed with his composing skill, and the trees on the right are roughly hewn with the needle to enhance the delicacy of the vision that he has seen beyond. They are, however, too coarse, too clumsy; and they have the air of being conscious of this use of theirs, and of being ashamed of it. The one careful representation of a natural fact, the blazing of the sun on a group of reeds which has been blown backward—like corn half laid by rain—so that the hollow curve resembles a concave mirror—nothing but blaze—jars on the impression made by the whole plate. It may be that the bad engraving has something to do with this, but nevertheless the effect is too startling. It is an uncommon occurrence. I have only seen it once, and it should not be introduced into the midst of a drawing which belongs not so much to Nature as to Dreamland.

No. LIV.

MILL, NEAR THE GRAND CHARTREUSE, DAUPHINY.

Drawn by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* G. H. DAWE.

I DO not know who was the etcher of this plate, but it is most likely by its engraver Dawe. It is badly done. The engraving, however, is excellent, so much so that it is supposed that Turner had a hand in it. I cannot myself trace his peculiar engraving anywhere. But the drawing speaks for itself. It reveals certain aspects of Turner's manifold mind so clearly that it is a duty to give it special attention.

In the *Devil's Bridge*, the scene represented is far more savage than that of this drawing. We are there placed higher up in the mountains beyond the region of the trees, nor is there any trace of humanity except the bleached skeleton of the mule of some traveller who had been cast away. But here, at a lower level, human toil, which has gone on for years and still goes on, has fixed its home in the very jaws of the gorge. The rude mill is set across the gulf of the torrent, and the light wooden

bridge, over which the workman is passing in the sunset, leads the miller to his labour. Nature is, even where she is tempestuous, used by man to do the works of peace. But it is sore and difficult labour, done in spite of the enmity of Nature. The roaring stream, the tumbling rocks, the overhanging cliffs that frown over the lonely mill, seem to threaten its life day by day. It is as nothing in the midst of all these mighty forces, yet to the artist, it and its bridge are the main idea of the subject: the eye of the composition, the keystone that knits the whole together. Turner has made this plain in his own way. There is, to the right of the window on the face of the mill, a little etched lozenge, with two lines descending from it to a point. That is the central point. It is repeated on a larger scale on the projecting angle of the rock below, and again lower down among the stones, but in a more disguised manner. The Mill then is dominant in the composition. But Turner has made it master of the scene because of the spirit of humanity within it. He felt, vast and overwhelming as the grandeurs of rock and wood and torrent were, that yet the little building of human hands which here has used, but in submission to law, rock and wood and torrent for its own just purpose, had a greater grandeur. It is in sympathy with this difficult and obedient victory of human effort that he pours behind the mill the scattered lights of the sunset and fills the sky above it with films of gracious cloud that seem to smile upon its loneliness. Nay, though at first we think that the mountains frown over it, afterwards we

feel that they have adopted it as a child of their own and now protect its frailty. When the works of man are wrought in fortitude, humility, and honesty, in harmony with the spirit of the place where they are to be, Nature ends by loving them, and adorning them as a mother adorns her child. It is a frequent thought of Turner's.[1]

When we turn from the humanity in the subject to its landscape, we meet Turner's sympathy not only with the savage power of Nature, but also with her tender beauty. The mountain precipices are hewn as with a giant's hand. The stream has worn and swept away masses of rock as huge as great houses. The waters never cease to struggle with them; and above the stream and rock, and on the cliff at every coign of vantage, the rock-rooted pines grow strongly, the children of the tempest, dark-plumed like warriors, armed too like warriors from point to point of their stems with long and narrow plates of iron mail. We stand alone amidst the tormented loneliness of desolation, watching the incessant activity of forces that destroy themselves and one another—and the whole is so drawn, so wrought together, that we feel the very

[1] It is the destruction of this adoption of buildings by Nature and of all her work upon them in development of their character and their beauty, which makes "restoration" so wicked. The front of S. Maria Novella at Florence has been wrought upon by Nature till through her wearing and carving toil upon the stones, and through her artist hand, laying on year by year subtle and lovely colour, it is as varied in surface and as beautiful as a hill-side. But this very beauty seems ugliness to the restorers, and they are already projecting its annihilation.

passion of the artist when he first beheld the gorge and wondered at the mill.

Yet, on the other hand, he painted with a joy as distinctive as his force, and with exquisite tenderness, the sunny trees that rest in peace upon this mountain slope, and the dispersed lights which play above the mill. And among the straight and rigid pines and contrasted with their dark and firm monotony of foliage, he drew the elastic grace of the chestnut, the trembling and sunlit variety of its leaves, and the upward spring of its young branches. A beautiful slope of undergrowth below, through which a falling rivulet makes music, touches still further this note of tender play; while above, the rosy sunset, far set in heavenly calm, pours into the wild glen its loveliness and pity.

These are two sides of Turner's soul. Both aspects of Nature are drawn and felt with equal intensity. Nothing is greater than his sympathy with the overwhelming power of Nature except his sympathy with her overwhelming tenderness. He draws these gigantic masses of rock, with the fierce stream roaring round them, with the sternest joy and truth. But I have seen in a little Yorkshire drawing his hand lingering with equal joy and truth over a small boulder in the dark pool of a mountain brook. Each manifold reflection in the water, each wrinkle in the stone, are laid in as if a fairy were at work, and over the stone one trailer of ivy strays, with every line on every leaf painted in half the space of one of these letters, and on the stone a kingfisher is watching whose

feathers seem to glow with all the colours of the rainbow woven in and out in lovely interchange. To paint both these extremes with equal delicacy and power, there must have been in Turner's mind, when he was at his best in work, absolute peace, joy, and unconsciousness of self.

As to the composition, the mill, as I said, is its centre. The rocks of the stream, though distributed with apparent indifference, are yet subjected with the strictest temperance to the demands of Turner's conception. They are so arranged as to force the mind to dwell on the knitting together of the jaws of the gorge in fierce resistance to the torrent, and it is at this very point that they approach close enough to enable the mill to be set between them, and to take for its work the full force of the confined water.

It is this confinement of the water which makes its terrible power, and explains the deep undercutting of the cliff beyond, as the depth of the undercutting impresses us with the long-enduring force of the torrent. Moreover, in the cleavage of the rocks below, Turner tells us why, when the ditch was cut by the water through the solid rock, it was cut not vertically, but in a slant.

Lastly, stability is given to the frail structure of the mill by an artifice which Turner often uses when he wishes to give the impression of strength. He underlies the triangle made by the roof of the mill with a reversed triangle made by the bridge and the two rocks underneath, as they lean towards one another. The mill is connected with the cliff above by the curve of the line of

the water falling from its wheel which continuing the curve inwards of the cliff lifts it higher into the air. The skill of the arrangement of the stems of the trees in the foreground is easily detected, and the arrangement is repeated as much as possible by the trees behind on the ridge of rock. The two midmost trees of this ridge close up the vista between the two first trees among the rocks, and in closing it bring near to the eye the steepness of the mountain slope behind them. On the other hand, the repetition of the two vertical and lofty lines of the cliff and of the tree by the upright supports of the bridge deepens and throws back the gorge.

No. LV.

ENTRANCE OF CALAIS HARBOUR.

Drawn, Etched, and Engraved by J. M. W. TURNER.

TURNER liked Calais well. One of the first pictures that revealed his genius was the *Calais Pier* of 1803. He drew the harbour again and again, and always with sympathy and pleasure, keeping more or less to the end the impression of the town as seen from the sea, its towers and walls dimly gleaming through the mist of the storm-driven spray. In the first state of this plate one uniform pall of dark and persistent vapour covers the whole sky, in front of which, and at a much lower level of air, a few white angry scudding clouds are driven, the heralds of an approaching squall. In the second state Turner has changed the aspect and temper of the sky. The squall has come and gone, and the wind now blows steadily. But the clouds which the squall had brought with it have left the sky full of their remnants, and these, arranged by the gale in continuous lines, are driven over the harbour inland from the sea. This *second state* then

represents what is happening in the sky about an hour later than the time at which the clouds of the *first state* were seen and drawn.

The storm appears to be now breaking, for the low sun has power. Its light slants through the mist on the horizon, illuminates the under edges of the driving clouds, and flings a yellow radiance, through the rain, on the sails of the fishing-boats, on the Pharos, and on the church of Calais.

It is a wild cross-sea, much disturbed by a fierce tide, which runs on Calais in a gale. This sea fills the front of the picture, and its rushing lines and the impetuous lift of its waves could not be better drawn. Unfortunately, little of this drawing can be seen in the photograph. What can be seen partly—and it is as fine as possible—is the broken and leaping water of the crests of the waves, caused by the refluent billow from the pier meeting those that are incoming. Look, too, at the noble way in which the great trawler sinks down into the hollow, full of weight, yet buoyant as a water-bird; and see how full of majesty Turner has made it, with its mighty canvas and the huge boom and mast; and how carefully and with what sympathy he has engraved the reefed sail, so as to tell at every point the story of the wind in it; and with what further sympathy he has given the boat a companion running into harbour with it, like friend with friend. He knew and loved all fishing-boats, and thought of them as sailors think of them—as living beings. They are coming home laden with sea-spoil, and

the houses and the churches of their crews are seen far beyond in the wild light of the gale. As we look we feel that Turner was painting his own deep feeling for the dangerous life of the fisher, and the charm of his safe return to quiet, to affection, and to the religion of the shore. And to make us feel this the more, he sends round the pier-head the barque outward bound, which in the midst of the fierce weather passes away from home into the danger and distresses of the sea.

All the force of the subject is in the impetuous slant of the mast and sails of the foremost boat, for this tells alike of the power of the wind and of the power of man using it for a purpose; and Turner enforces this slant by the lines of light which behind it slope in a contrary direction, and by the vertical masts of the barque which, with those also of the left-hand ship, seem to lift the pier and to send back into distance the town at the bottom of the harbour. As to the flags, see how they speak of the wind. They are straining madly to escape; and the buoy with the rude lantern—how desolate, how full of the rudeness of the plunging waves! And the pier-head beyond it—how it rounds itself forth, large-bellied, to resist the ceaseless beat of ocean!

No. LVI.

DUMBLAIN ABBEY, SCOTLAND.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* T. LUPTON.

THIS is Allan Water, the romantic stream, soft in the evening light, peaceful with the Cathedral above it, as it was before railways rushed by to disturb its old-world quietude, and flowing gently down to the little bridge below where the low-roofed hamlet rests, and where the delicate trees, tossed into the air, are so full of the radiant light that they seem like clouds. All is still, for the sunset hour draws near. The women washing are finishing their work and preparing for their homeward way: some shake the clothes in air, others gather them up into a bundle, lifting them from the flat reach of sand and pebbles where they have been drying all the day. The sun drops behind the point of wood on which the Cathedral stands, the place will soon be silent, and Turner, as his way is, deepens the quiet by repeating his objects. The trees near the bridge are doubled by those on the ridge; the stones are doubled also; the bridge is re-echoed by the arch between the rocks in the river, the low hill beyond the hamlet by the under edge of the cloud above it, and the group of women

by the outline of the trees on the bank immediately above their heads.

In the midst of this sentiment of peace, he sets the Cathedral—ruined nave and shattered tower. But while Turner sorrowed for it, he felt also its ancient honour, and he desired to give to its old age which wore the crown of great suffering and great doing, not only the aspect of endurance and fortitude, but also of stateliness. Therefore he lifts the cliff on which he places it twice as high into the air as it is in reality, and instead of leaving the Cathedral where it actually is, at a distance from the edge of the cliff, he puts it, like Durham, on the very rim so that it seems from its front to command the whole country. This is the artist's tribute to its widowed greatness; he has "painted his impression." But the days are over when it was a power, and now its work is done. And it was because Turner felt this common charity that he gathered round it peace, and shed the soft light of the declining sun through its broken windows, and made us fancy how windless its grass was within and how grave the shadows that slept around its tombs.

Below, under its religious guard, he places one of the usual labours of daily life, a labour older than the Cathedral itself and carried on in the same place when the Cathedral first arose. For the washing-places of women are matters of old custom and tradition. The work then does not jar on the feeling of the drawing; it too has its ancient sentiment. Moreover, the daily labours as the daily charities of life are like the flowers of the field, full of charm. And Turner has not

forgotten that this special labour is always picturesque. The figures are better drawn than usual—that of the woman with the sheet which she tosses in the air is charming, almost Greek in attitude, in grace, and in the simplicity of its motive.

Between the ruined Cathedral and the work of man, the promontory rises clothed with trees. At its base, above the women, and set in half light, a lovely group of mountain ash is exquisitely etched and engraved, and full of change and fantasy. Behind it, on the steepest part of the hill and in deepest shade, wonderfully varied by reflected light, is the dwarf woodland which gives the subject its central darkness. Above it, to make still greater variety, and yet with accurate truth, the light of the sinking sun shines over the top of the cliff past the Cathedral door, and lights up all the upper foliage. It bends round the edge of the ridge also, filling the trees which rise from it with vaporous light, and bringing reflected light into the most distant hollow of the cliff. And, to tell us more, the shadow falling in a slant from the two trees on the ridge marks off the exact angle at which the sun's rays strike upwards through the sky.

The evening heaven is pale, and all the air is filled with transparent vapour. A few light cirrus clouds float in it, their lower edges gleaming. Full of sleepy peace, the soft spirit of the sky broods in a blessing above the river and the hamlet. Twilight comes, and over all—

> "Her dewy fingers draw
> The gradual, dusky veil."

PART XII.

ISSUED JANUARY 1, 1816.

LVII.

NORHAM CASTLE, ON THE TWEED.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

NORHAM CASTLE is one of the simplest in sentiment, and most direct in composition, of the engravings in the Liber Studiorum. It is worth while to compare it with the same subject in the "Rivers of England."

Turner had seen Norham once, and then the sailboat, the cows in the water, the boats drawn on the shore and floating by the beach, were romantic in the golden sunset. He never forgot them, and even when, for the illustrations to Scott's works, he painted the castle by moonlight, the boat with the sail reappears in the same place. But in each drawing, the aspect of Nature, the time of day, the disposition of the objects and the sentiment are different. The moods of Turner were as various, I had almost said, as those of Nature herself. In the engraving from the "Rivers" the sun has not gone so far to its setting as in this Liber print; it is directly behind the castle, and

its rays break through the upper windows. More of "sparkle" falls on river and rock and hill; the clouds roll back from the sun and curl up from the tops of the hills, nor are there those solemn cirrus clouds which, touched with light, seem in our subject to look down upon the castle with tender charity. The sun is not so near his death as in the Norham of the Liber Studiorum, and therefore Turner has filled this Norham of the "Rivers" with more life, more humanity, more movement; there is a greater crowd of boats, of cattle, and of men. The river is rippled more strongly by the wind, and the reflections are more manifold. But the plate is commonplace in comparison with this grave and dignified composition—more grave in this early proof than in the *first state* where the sky behind the castle is lit up with the diverging rays of the setting sun.

The etching of the rock, the changes of reflected light upon it, the sharp etching of the mill shed and the low house on the point, which in their keen blackness are so necessary to the whole composition, are unavoidably lost in the autotype. But the deep and quiet seriousness of the sentiment remains. The castle, set high in air against the pure evening sky, rules proudly over the whole landscape, filling the eye and the imagination. Turner has bound up its masonry with the roots of the rock; it has become a part of Nature. Tweed herself is subject to it; it rules over the Cheviots in the distance. The sun is its friend, and illuminates it like a mountain peak. But it is all in vain. The ruin of the labour and glory of

men is deeper in Turner's mind than the dignity and splendour of the past, and as if to insist on this, he places on the left hand a cabin which in its outline echoes the greater part of the castle, and in itself, were it not for this pathetic analogy, is one of the ugliest things he ever put into a landscape. Nor are the stranded boat and the figure of the boy less awkward. The only use of the boy, as he stands there like a recruit at drill, is to continue the line of the wall of the hut, and with his reflection to lift the hut into some height. The same thing is done for the castle by the upright sail of the boat, and by its reflection. One other matter of composition is interesting. The repetition of the line of the castle wall by the back of the cow in the stream below, and that of the curve of the rock on the right hand by the outline of the cows on the hillside increase the effect of evening peace and bind into harmony this portion of the drawing.

Lastly, Tweed herself, in the shallow reach, seems calm, but a light wind ruffles the surface, and all the reflections are lengthened. The sail of the boat is brought down almost to the bottom of the plate, its image being taken up again and again by every ripple. Over the whole space of water there is such a ceaseless interchange of reflections and shadows, that it ought to yield to study additional knowledge of their differences and of the distinct way they play their parts when they meet together. Underneath the sail-boat, underneath the cows, they mingle but are not confused with one another.

Lastly, Turner thought, as we think, of the lines of Scott—

> "Day set on Norham's Castle steep
> And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,
> And Cheviot's mountains lone;"

but Scott wrote of Norham when it was superb, and Turner paints its sadness. Yet the sentiment of the poem is also here; and time delays with us, while lost in feeling, and silenced by the evening dream, we seem to move only with the slow wafting of the boat upon the stream.

No. LVIII.

RAGLAN CASTLE.

Drawn and Engraved by J. M. W. TURNER.

THE etching of this plate is not by Turner, and is so commonplace and monotonous, especially among the trees, that I almost seem to hear Turner say—"I must save the subject from failure and mezzotint it myself." It is certain that he did engrave the plate with his own hand, and with the greatest care and delicacy.

A word is due to the new manner in which he now engraved, not only this plate, but also the *Source of the Arveron*. I have said that when he first took up engraving in mezzotint, he used the tools almost as a painter uses his brushes, and neither worked within the rules, nor bound himself down to the methods of the engraver. He made experiments on the copper, and with the tools; he scraped in and rubbed off mezzotint as if he were working with colour on a drawing, and he attempted to produce in mezzotint effects as subtle and delicate as those he produced in water-colour. He did produce them; but he forgot, or did not choose to remember,

that a few printings would wear away the fine films of mezzotint he left upon the copper, and that then all his effects would vanish and the harmony of the whole plate be disturbed. This fate befell the centre of the *Frontispiece*, the *Mer de Glace*, the *Kirkstall Crypt*, the *Calm*, the *Inverary Pier*, and in a lesser degree the *Severn and the Wye*.

But when he engraved the *Raglan* and the *Source of the Arveron*, he had come to understand the lesson of these misfortunes, or he felt that, when the etching was as badly done as in these two plates, he could not engrave with the audacity and freedom he used when the etching was his own, and good. At any rate, he changes in these two plates his whole method of engraving. He works in the same way as the ordinary mezzotint engraver, and follows all the rules. He has mastered the business, and seeks only to do that which can be well done in mezzotint, and which when done, will last through a number of heavy printings. And he succeeded. Even in their third state, after about a hundred impressions had been taken, *Raglan* and the *Source of the Arveron* do not lose a great deal. There is less fine surface and less gradation in their later conditions, but the general harmony of the plates—the very thing which in the others is immediately altered and afterwards lost—is preserved. I have drawn attention to this change not only because of its technical interest, but also because it illustrates Turner's character. He leaves behind the fanciful following of his own will, and submits himself to Law.

Nevertheless, though he has schooled himself to employ his tools in the manner of the engraver, he has done his mezzotinting with the refinement of a great artist, and with that freedom which works boldly within law. No mere engraver, not even the best of those who worked with him at this book, could have filled the woods of the further bank with such a changing play of light and dark, and misty shadow; nor rescued the etching of the tall tree near the Castle from disgrace by scattering behind it little clouds of mezzotint to suggest the foliage. No mere engraver could have represented the darkness of the bank above the water as shimmering with reflected radiance, nor laid the surface of the moat so flat, and yet thrilled it from point to point with incessant change of light and colour. Precious is the proper word for such engraving.

Raglan Castle is the name—no one knows why—which has been attached to this plate. But Turner published it without a title, and Mr. Rawlinson says that "neither the Castle nor its surroundings are like Raglan, but that it has a marked resemblance to Berry Pomeroy Castle, near Totnes. Turner had been painting about a year before in South Devon. The moat is now filled up, but the miller hard by remembers when there was just such a moat as is drawn here."

It is as well that no one should know clearly where to place this Castle and its solitary woods. For it does not belong to the real world. Turner was living while he drew in the land of long-lost Romance, and the light that rests

upon it is the light of the artist's dream. It is such a forgotten haunt as Peredur or Percivale might have come to in their wanderings and found dwelt in by a knight who had seen it overthrown by foes, and now lived beside it in hermitage; among

> "The grace of forest charms decayed,
> And pastoral melancholy."

"Last and sweetest," says Mr. Ruskin, "Raglan, in utter solitude, amidst the wild wood of its own pleasance; the towers rounded with ivy, and the forest-roots choked with undergrowth, and the brook languid amid lilies and sedges. Legends of gray knights and enchanted ladies keeping the woodman's children away at sunset."

It is evening now in the deserted place, and Turner sends through the windows of the Castle the rays of the fading sunset. With these he gilds the edge of the tower, with their light the tops of both the towers glow, and beyond the bridge one ray gleams through the trees and brightens into unwonted radiance the dark waters of the moat. It is Turner's oft-repeated sentiment, his way of telling us that he and Nature are both in sympathy with the forgotten passion of the past.

Above the Castle, as over Norham, the upper clouds bend in consolation. There is a quiet spirit in the sky, and the moors lie at rest in the light of it. But silence is deepest round the ruined towers, undisturbed save by the cry and the splashing of the water-hen as it beats its wings and trails its feet across the surface of the moat;

and that sound always makes a silence deeper and a solitude more wild. The tall trees, dark and lonely, not a leaf moving, seem to sleep in the voiceless twilight; the birds are hushed in the woods, the sluggish water has no motion, the reflections of the bridge are unbroken, not a breath of wind stirs the tall reeds, and underneath the bank the white lilies, with their soft leaves outspread, close their petals in the pensive air. Night is coming and gray uprising mist, and the old indwellers of the Castle will then remember the ancient days and come to visit the woods and mourn among the halls they loved.

LIX.

VILLE DE THUN: SWITZERLAND.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* THOMAS HODGETTS.

"PAINT your impressions," said Turner once to an artist, and it was advice that came out of his own practice. But if so—what an impression is this of the smiling town of Thun! It is said that the fault lay in the engraver, Hodgetts, who certainly has made his other plate, *Lauffenbourg*, as gloomy and even gloomier than this; but when we have laid all the blame we can on the head of the engraver, there still remains the fact that one of the brightest and prettiest places in Switzerland, with its lovely river gently flowing by, overshadowed by soft and stately trees, and its gleaming houses and shining towers, is turned into this! It is an impression that Turner has drawn, and a dull, gloomy, and angry one it is. Look at the trees—they are tormented and wrenched awry by the passing malice of the artist. Look at the houses, flung upon the paper. Look at the despair of the river. Look at the melancholy hill, at the hideous sky, with the outlines of the clouds etched,

as if to give them hardness. Look at the snow-crowned Alps. They have no outline, it is blurred into the sky. Nature never leaves her mountains without a clear edge, and I do not remember another drawing of Turner's where he has neglected this truth. Look at the meanness of the towers, made mean on purpose, for they are finely proportioned in reality. Look at the woebegone figures, and then pour round the whole the colourless mist of the grey cold day in which Turner must have seen it, and we have, not the town of Thun, but the mood of Turner when he drew it. There is nothing beautiful here but the copsewood that runs along the wall, nothing felt with any pleasure but the old castle on the hill, and his pleasure in that was in spite of his ill-temper.

The composition may be good and satisfy the eye, but it is worried out of its goodness by the agitation and ill-humour of its parts. The engraving then has not much interest as a work of art, but it reveals a passing phase of Turner's character; and it tells us plainly that every impassioned artist puts into form not what is actually before his eyes, but that which is within his heart.

No. LX.

THE SOURCE OF THE ARVERON, IN THE VALLEY OF CHAMOUNI, SAVOY.

Drawn and Engraved by J. M. W. TURNER.

WHEN Turner went to the Continent for the first time, he visited Chamouni, and being full of ardent power and youth, was able to record at first with exultation, and afterwards with awe and exultation, the impressions he received from the solemn, desolate, and majestic beauty of the valley. No one has adequately painted this terrible loveliness, and it was only genius like Turner's that could understand or partly succeed in expressing the lonely life, the destroying force that dwell in the upper valleys of the Alps; only youth that could have enough audacity not to be daunted by their vastness, and enough ardour not to be overwhelmed by their primæval strength and terror. It is no exaggeration to say that these early drawings have some of the grandeur of Chamouni itself, that Turner's mind, when he made them, was admitted as companion by the spirit of the valley and the mountains. He never drew the higher Alps so well again.

Nor was he often in the mood to care to draw them. They were too inhuman for him, and when he painted Nature wholly for her own sake, he preferred the Highland glen or the Yorkshire glade to the Mer de Glace or the summit of the St. Bernard. But he felt bound in his book of Studies to represent the Alpine desolation, and this *Source of the Arveron* is a recollection of one of the early drawings of which I have spoken. I seem to detect in it a certain want of gladness, even a languor of work. It is unequal, exceedingly good in some parts, curiously poor in others, and it may have been owing to this absence of care for the subject at the time he wrought this plate that he gave over the etching of it to another hand than his own. It was a great pity that he did not do it himself, for it is very ill done. With one exception—a bit of his own labour—I have not been able to discover a single line of any fine quality; and I do not know whether one ought to be more angry with Turner for giving so important a subject to so incompetent an etcher, or to be more amazed that he endured the work when it was finished. And he did not altogether endure it. I am certain that he took out the original etching of the rocks in the right-hand corner, and put them in himself; and perhaps added some etching to the lower branches of the pines. At any rate these rocks are his; and he may have thought with regard to the rest that he could overcome its ignorance and poverty by his engraving. He succeeded in this where the glacier rolls down on the right among the pines, but not even his

mezzotinting could redeem the etching of the valley and the mountains upon the left. These mountains are without distinction, size, or majesty, their pines are abominable, and no one would imagine, who looks on these raw and naked precipices, that they are hillsides whose wealth of light and shadow and colour, of rocky point and folded hollow, of meadow slopes and gleaming precipice, is almost inexhaustible. They have neither the character nor the wonder of the place.

It is different on the other side of the plate where the glacier gleams among the trees. Far below, we see the arch whence pours the Arveiron, and it is owing to the delicate gradations of the engraving of the descending stairs of pines that we are enabled to realize its distance. As to the glacier itself, it is not only magnificently engraved—the very texture of the ice seems to be given—but the living nature of the mass that like a great serpent crawls onward is revealed. Turner has felt the inevitable march, the slow powerful push from above, the slant forward of the ice-waves peaked like the summits of a running mountain range, the upward swell in the midst, the huge depth and volume, of the frozen river. The pines, tormented and riven, by its side; the enormous blocks, magnificently arranged and engraved, of the loose-piled stones of the moraine among which the trees grow, tell the tale of the glacier's fierce and grinding descent, of the way in which year by year it heaves away to its edges the rocks and dust it has carried downwards from the distant heights.

And then, beyond these things, the imagination of Turner is busy conceiving the terrible solitudes among the higher peaks, and he makes us picture them, and feel their gloom. He shrouds the upper ranges of the glacier in whirling mist, for he could not tell how desolate were the icy valleys from whence it came. He has told the same story in the sky. Masses of cloud, fold after fold, and moving by their own wind, are pouring forth from the gates of the aiguilles. We might imagine that they had risen from a mighty caldron set to boil far up in a deep snow vale, inaccessible by man, where, surrounded by towering summits, the frost-giants meet and keep their feast. The smoke of its seething, seized by the wind, is borne outward, and rolls along, involution after involution, slow, incessant, inexhaustible. And through it, to tell how huge its volumes are, one burst of sunlight shines, fierce and blazing as a thunderbolt. This is imagination seeing, through fact, into the heart of the universe.

No. LXI.

TENTH PLAGUE OF EGYPT.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* W. SAY.

THERE were two things which Turner was bound to represent when he took this subject—one was the wrath of Heaven, and the other the sorrow of Egypt. The first he represented by the outburst of destroying fire from a sky filled with portentous cloud, and by the effect of this upon the earth. This then belongs to his experience as a painter of Nature, and it is finely and solemnly conceived. The second he represented by the figures in terror and grief which are scattered through his drawing, and these are conceived with all the simplicity and the naïveté of a child, the same kind of naïveté which he shows in the *Fifth Plague* and in the *Rispah*. The woman who sits in the foreground, and whose dead babe lies across her lap, sits in the same attitude as Rizpah, her face concealed with her hand. Another is stooping to lift up her child from the ground to which it has just

fallen dead; and her friend, holding a lamp, looks down in sympathy. There is no reason why the women should be there outside the city in the deep midnight, except Turner's incapacity to represent, as Tintoret would have done, the market-place filled with a hundred wild figures of sorrow and death. He did what he could. He placed a few grief-stricken women on a lonely road among trees that had, like Egypt, suffered. Through the brushwood in the background, another woman, running and shrieking, is coming up, her attitude instinct with horror and grief. Along the parapet wild figures fly, terrified by the lightning of doom. Two women in agony and fear climb the steps outside the wall, while below them lies dead one of the first-born. This is all that is told about the tragedy among men. It is just what a child might conceive, and its only force grows out of this simplicity. The architecture shares in this ignorant naïveté. It did not enter into Turner's mind to take any pains to make it realistic, but he had vague recollections of Egyptian portals, of Doric temples, of pyramids, of mediæval city walls, and he invented this extraordinary city, where the artist appears only in the disposition of the lines and of the light and shade. He did not even think of making the vegetation Egyptian. The foreground is filled with English weeds and European trees, the shattered trunk of one of which is plainly a memory of a pine in the Alps, riven by lightning and stripped of bark and branches. The sole attempts at realism are the pyramid planted, where it could not be, in the midst of the town, and the

four queer hieroglyphic letters on the vast pillar to the left, one of which is the Greek Theta. The whole is a very curious example of his mind when working on matters of which he was ignorant, and for which he had no sympathy.

But when we turn to that which he could represent with knowledge, to the conception he had of the wrath of God shown in the wrath of Nature, it is a different thing on which we look. He had to tell of the sudden outbreaking of Death at a moment, and he chooses the very moment. The children have only that instant fallen dead. "At midnight there was a cry heard." But though the death was instantaneous, Turner has realized the long gathering of the menace of death. We see from the vast pall of lurid cloud which broods over the town that its terror has been creeping up since evening fell. Every house and street must have been as dark for hours as the Under-world. Then, at midnight, out of the blackest centre of the cloud, behind the great pillar, a massive bolt of lightning has broken, by whose red gleam we see the city lit up in a moment, and the greatest brightness of the light is on the group of women with their dead children. Lower down in the sky, beneath the vast piles of vapour whose mass is revealed and fringed by the flare of the thunderbolt, another flash darts forth and strikes on the lofty temple of the gods of Egypt. The horror is deepened by the dead calm. There is no wind such as usually accompanies a thunderstorm. These supernatural clouds have gathered without

a breath, without a sound. And Turner marks this windlessness by the unwavering light of the tiny lamp which the woman carries in her hand. The blasted tree trunks, with their sparse foliage, are intended by him—in his symbolic way—to represent the blasted and almost ruined empire of Egypt, smitten by plague on plague. "Know ye not yet that Egypt is destroyed?" Therefore he makes them seem all ablaze with the fierce fire of the thunderbolt. The same symbol occurs again to the right of the seated woman, in the dark and naked trees which repeat on a smaller scale, but without the flame, the forms of the trees above.

If, then, there is only the imagination and the drawing as of a child in the figures that represent the sorrow of Egypt; there is the imagination of a great artist in the appalling sky and in the midnight outburst, out of a windless heaven, of the signal lightning which represents the Doom of God.

PART XIII.

ISSUED JANUARY, 1819.

No. LXII.

WATER-CRESS GATHERERS.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* THOMAS LUPTON.

THIS is a pastoral, but a gloomy one. There is something terrible in the insistance of Turner on the misery of the poor, and especially of the young of the poor. Now and again, as in *Juvenile Tricks* and the *Young Anglers*, he makes them enjoy themselves. But what enjoyment! And what a type of youth! Uneducated, sickly, coarse, neglected, rude. And here he adds the misery of the climate to poverty and disease. The boy who carries the deformed child is like a young thief. The others crouching under the bridge, on the wet ground, dressed in rags, are degraded and miserable; and Nature is pitiless to them; the driving rain and bitter wind beat on them unregarding. And man has no pity either for them; we think of their weary walk into London with their baskets,

and the few pence given for so much labour. We are spared nothing. There is the naked truth, without one touch of sentimental beauty. This is not Gainsborough and his peasants. And the scene is in harmony with the thought. The trees are suffering like the children, beaten by wind as they by fate, but Turner takes the pains with them which he will not take with the boys. They are nobly etched, with every spray and leaf feeling and telling of the wind. Look at the boughs of the pollard willow above the bridge, with all the soft long leaves blown away from the lithe wands on which they grow; and see how rigid and set, in contrast with the lissome swaying of their boughs, is its stem and those of its companions in the hollow.

The clouds also are tormented like the earth. We know from those piled over the town, among which the broken sunlight of the stormy day is shining, that it is a south-west wind, and that it has rained all day. But the moment Turner has now seized is the moment of a fresh outburst of the storm. The most fierce and menacing of all the clouds in the Liber Studiorum is coming up, its edges ragged with rain. In the earliest proofs, there were not those black avant-couriers. But Turner, to make us conceive the passion of the wind, tore them away from the main body of the cloud, and inserted them in the published plate, dark messengers to tell what was at hand.

There is no peace anywhere save in the gloomy, slow creeping stream below, which steals between its heavy

banks of clay, and in the rotting boat whose curves are opposed to the driving slant of the clouds, and in the tower which stands like the bell-tower of an Italian monastery, firm and still. But the storm is first in Turner's mind, and the misery below; and the peace is only the peace of the corrupt stream, and of the ignorance of the poor.

Lastly, the curves made by the figures and by the shadow of the bridge enforce by opposition those made in the trees by the wind, and double our sense of the strength of the gale; and it is worth observing with what skill Turner has modified the long straight lines of the wall by the round wheels of the gig, and the fixity of the wall by the movement of the horse.

No. LXIII.

TWICKENHAM—POPE'S VILLA;

Sometimes called Garrick's Temple and Hampton Church and The Alcove.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* H. DAWE.

WE rarely find Turner in a sunny humour, but in this plate he is at rest and happy. It is true, where there is no tragedy or no menace of it, he does not rise into his lofty region, and this drawing, though rich, and warmly felt, is yet commonplace. The only ideal sentiment is that which is naturally linked to the Church and its shadowed graves, and though Turner has felt this, he has not felt it fully. It is an artistic, and not a religious sentiment, which he has thrown around the Church.

It is a hot summer afternoon and the sun sinks slowly to his rest. The sky is filled with his light, and the clouds are for the most part quenched in its brilliancy. A few remain floating in the burning æther, crimson above, but their under-edges blazing with white light. One, right

over the river, and hung in the middle air, creates from its place the aërial distance of the sky. The others curve above the sun, making the triumphal arch through which he goes to his sleep. There is a sense of warm peace in this sky, but on the whole it remains unimaginative.

The river below is studied with greater feeling. Three pillars of shadow, divided by two of light, break it up in front, and these are themselves broken up with reflected lights and shadows, so that even here, in the citied stream, we are made conscious of Nature's variety. Then comes the wide sunlit space, full of breadth and repose, and wrought with the utmost delicacy of shadow and reflection as it winds round the wooded point and among the distant houses. The river is quite still—we know it from the unbroken reflection of the sail—but there is a strange ripple in the shadow of the pine and of the temple, and we wonder if Turner put it in to break up the heavy mass of shadow, or to relieve the flat of the white calm. But as we look, we understand. What he does, he has reason for. It is the mill-wheel turning in the distance which has sent the ripple down.

The mass of trees which fills the foreground is rich and weighty with foliage. The great elm is nobly drawn, but the remaining trees are too heavy, and the birch, which ought to be delicate, is especially wanting in grace. The whole of the group is in confusion, and I cannot understand how the light of the sun turns the corner of the wall and burns on the foliage which droops over it.

Part of the sentiment of the plate is that which has

collected for many generations round the Thames near London—the sentiment, if we may call it so, of contented opulence, of settled life, of unravished quiet. The great river flows by, plenteous and peaceful: and the lush grasses and reeds along its banks, the deep meadows under the great trees, have been undisturbed for centuries. The wall of the pleasant villa where some retired burgess lives is overhung with full foliaged boughs, such as grow out of an ancient garden; and the ivy that clasps its stones is stemmed like a great tree, so long has been its life. Wealth speaks from every part of the landscape. It is this that Turner has felt and realized; there is not a trace that war has ever approached the place.

The Temple is a wealthy citizen's fancy, and one would at first think that it was the central subject of the drawing. But though it imposes itself upon us, it is not Turner's chief thought. His chief thought is the parish Church. It was its peace, the soft mastery it kept over the landscape which struck him this summer evening, and it is around it that the true sentiment of the drawing is concentrated. Beside its spires the sun declines, and bathes the whole building in dazzling light. This is the glowing heart of the drawing. The gate below continues the lines of the tower and lifts it higher. The river takes up the thought of the Church, and in the space where reflected light is brightest holds its tower shadowing downwards. I do not think the reflection could rightly have got there, but if not, Turner inserted it in order to knit our minds round the impression that the Church

made upon him. The trees in the graveyard, especially the broad outspreading linden-tree, are done with extreme delicacy and pleasure, with so much pleasure that I think when he came to the place where he made this drawing he remembered the sense of homeliness and repose he had felt when, passing through the churchyard, he lingered on his way among its trees. Why he has placed beside the wall two pines like Italian pines, and another by the river, I cannot tell. Some drift of Italian feeling arising from the Temple led him perchance to this. But they do not interfere with the sentiment which accumulates around the Church. It was not a very deep sentiment, but while it lasted it was true. And it is the sentiment of Gray's Elegy.

No. LXIV.

BONNEVILLE, SAVOY.

Drawn by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* H. DAWE.

BONNEVILLE is, or was, a little hamlet on the road between Geneva and Chamouni, at the foot of Mont Vergy. The river Arve which flows past it is crossed by a bridge, and beside the bridge is the white building with the rounded tower which is the prominent light in Turner's drawings of the place. The limestone mountains rise on either hand, and beyond is the range of Mont Blanc.

When Turner first visited Switzerland, in his twenty-fifth year, his pencil was never out of his hand, and he was so stirred by the vastness and solemnity of the scenery that his whole art was ever after affected by an impression of awe, even of desolation. Few things can have impressed him more than the landscape he saw as he walked from Geneva to Chamouni, and we are able to follow him, almost step by step, as he drew near to Bonneville. He stopped to draw his first sight of the village, and we have his record of it in the drawing Mr.

Ruskin exhibited some years ago at the Fine Art Society. The old and noble keep stands by the side of the road, and beyond, on the left, above the town, is the castle on the ridge. In a tiny sketch which has been engraved, he recalled in after years this first view.

On the same day, but higher up the road, he made his sketch for another drawing of the same size and quality as Mr. Ruskin's. The old keep is now left behind, the castle on the ridge is lifted high against the sky, and behind it is the whole range of the Alps. In all these three drawings there are two girls, and a shepherd driving his flock to watering. They are differently arranged in each, but he had evidently seen them when he first stopped to sketch, and so tenacious was his memory that many years afterwards, when he made the sepia drawing for the print in the Liber Studiorum, the girls and the sheep reappear, but the sheep are few in number and they sleep by the waters of the Arve.

Later on in the day, as the sun was dipping behind the mountains, he came nearer to the village, and then he made a third sketch, from which the drawing now at Farnley was made. It is this drawing which is reproduced from memory in the *Bonneville* of the Liber Studiorum. It seems to be a somewhat wearied recollection, but much of the apparent weakness of the plate may be due to the etching which is probably from the hand of the engraver Dawe. The pines which climb the hill could not be worse done, and the outlines of the trees are not much better. Nor is the engraving as full of gra-

dation and force as Dawe was capable of making it. On the whole, the plate has been treated with carelessness, like a neglected child. But the spirit of the still afternoon on which Turner drew it, is here. The sheep slumber quietly. The wide river comes in stillness round the point where the tall trees grow, and washes with a low ripple up the grassy bank. Its stream is dark in the shadow of the mountains, and the darkness deepens the calm. The sun is not seen, but it still shines on the towered building; and high up in the golden sky the peaks of Mont Blanc keep an undisturbed majesty. The air is full of moisture, clouds form in the hollows of the limestone range, the distance is mellowed in soft vapour, and the mist rising slowly forms pale clouds in the upper sky, their edges radiant with the sunlight.

There is less of human interest in the drawing than is usual with Turner. The two figures are conventional, and the building has no sentiment. The bridge, in its solitude above the silent stream, speaks more to the heart than anything else in the print. But I can scarcely wonder at this absence of human sentiment. For Turner stood here at the gate of the great mountain region. He must have felt already the impressive massiveness of the great limestone ranges on each side; heaved upwards and curled over and battlemented as no English hills he had seen. He must have wondered when he saw the multitudinous battalions of pines advancing up the slopes, and above the slopes the iron walls, their upper edge jagged like a wild beast's teeth—characteristics of the Savoy

limestones he has scarcely succeeded in representing. But his marvel and his sentiment of awe would be increased tenfold as he felt that beyond the portal of the hills there was another mountain world, infinitely greater than any he had as yet beheld, into which he should penetrate next day, and of which the lofty and silent Alpine height he now drew with so much care was king and lord. He was overwhelmed, it seems to me, by this impression, and for that reason perhaps the sentiment of Humanity was subordinated to that of the vastness and solitude of Nature.

No. LXV.

INVERARY CASTLE AND TOWN, SCOTLAND.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* CHARLES TURNER.

UNDER two aspects Turner has seen Inverary in the Liber Studiorum. Once in the calm of morning, in the absolute peace of sky and sea in which he had drawn its pier, engraving as well as etching the plate with his own hands. A second time he has seen it here, perhaps the same day in the afternoon when the weather had changed, and the quiet of the dawn had passed into the gusty evening which we see in this picture. The sky is full of clouds, and nothing of the morning's peace endures but the low-lying bars of bright cloud above the round-topped hill, where the sun is setting. The moment chosen is one of Turner's favourite moments, when a sudden squall has increased the force of the wind, aroused the fishermen to action, and made confusion among the boats. The brig is reefing and furling her sails, the boats are dragging at their anchors, and one is being pushed

and pulled into the water to save it from being dashed against the shore. All is in haste and telling of the wind, but most of all the sea which is flashing into broken water and tumbled up and down all along the rim of the drawing. It is the instant Scott has given in a single line—

"The blackening wave is edged with white."

But Turner is not satisfied with speaking of this moment of wind. He wishes to make us feel that the place is incessantly wind-swept, that it is the constant haunt of the tempests that come from the sea. Therefore he places in the foreground and rising into the sky two almost naked firs, drawn with his utmost care, and wrought out inch by inch all along their stems with one purpose—to show how from their earliest childhood they have suffered from, and have resisted, the gale. I need not speak of them, for Mr. Ruskin has, and here are his words:—

"These pines are both in perfect poise, representing a double action: the warping of the trees away from the sea-wind, and the continual growing out of the boughs on the right-hand side, to recover the balance. Turn the page so as to be horizontal, and you ought to feel that, considered now as branches, both would be out of balance. If you turn the heads of the trees to your right, they are wrong, because gravity would have bent them more downwards; if to your left, wrong, because the law of resilience would have raised them more at the extremities."

The two masts isolate this desolate and mournful life of the trees as in a frame, and with them the figure near their roots on whom so much of the composition depends. The sky is overworked and troubled. It seems a failure, all save the quiet space over the hills whose sentiment contrasts with and enhances the tempestuous day. On the whole, though excellent in much of its detail, the drawing does not bring its parts into unity. Colour might accomplish this, but here it is not done.

No. LXVI.

ŒSACUS AND HESPERIE.

Vide Ovid's Mets., Book XI.

Drawn, Etched, and Engraved by J. M. W. TURNER.

ŒSACUS, son of Priam and Alexirhoë, was born under tree-shadowed Ida, and growing up within the woods, hated cities, and lived among the solitary hills; and in time he came to love Hesperie, daughter of the stream Cebrenus, and sought her often through the woods. And it happened that one day he came upon her, seated on the banks of her father's river, drying her locks thrown over her shoulders in the sun. When she saw him she fled away, and a snake lurking in the grass stung her foot, and she died. And he, miserable, threw himself from a rock into the sea, and Tethys in pity, changed him into a didapper; but the pity was cruel, for though changed, he still remembered Hesperie, and desiring death, could not die.

This is the story Turner chose to illustrate, a story of death and fate overcoming love, like that of Procris and

Drawn Painted & Engraved by J.M.W. Turner May R.A. 1804

AESACUS AND HESPERIE.

Vide Ovid Met.ᵒ Book XI.

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Cephalus. In *Procris and Cephalus* we see the death itself, and the last rays of sunset mourn it, or the arrow of the Dawn has caused it. Here, Death has not yet come, and the sunlight, as in Ovid's verse, shines through the secret woodland place where Hesperie sits beside her father's waters.

The drawing is, of all the Liber Studiorum, the most romantic, and perhaps the most beautiful. I have elsewhere drawn attention to the similar treatment by Shelley and Turner, each in his own art, of vast expanses of landscape seen from a distance, and of all the work and changes of the cloud-scenery of day and night, of storm and calm. These artists, in their relation to Nature, have in these two matters one mind.

It is not fanciful to say, though it is a curious thing, that Turner and Keats also resemble one another in their treatment of classical subjects, such as the *Cephalus and Procris* and the *Œsacus and Hesperie*. The scenery of "Endymion," and indeed of "Hyperion," is largely drawn from the woodlands and dells of England; and the classic figures Keats introduces are such as an imaginative boy would create when he dreamt of the realms of Greek fable, and did not know enough of archæology to question whether his conception was right or wrong, whether his characters dressed like Greeks or talked like a Greek play. Therefore he was not forced to alter his work incessantly to make it more correct, nor ever led into that disbelief in the imaginative truth of what he wrote which would have troubled his spontaneity. He

wrote in "Endymion" like an inspired child, and with the faith and passion of a child. Therefore, though the "Endymion" and "Lamia" are unscholarlike, they are far nearer the note of pure fable and legend in Greece, than all the special Greek poetry written since the time of Keats by Arnold or Swinburne or Tennyson. The science of these poets has been too much for their imagination, and their form too pedantic for the life in their subject.

It was exactly so with Turner in these subjects drawn from Greek Mythology. The scenery is that of the English woodland and river, and the figures come forth from Turner's unschooled and childlike imagination. They are badly drawn, but he has faith in their rightness. Simplicity and passion belong to them, and Procris and Cephalus, Œsacus and Hesperie, live in his drawing as they lived in his own mind. He is wholly free from that conceit of knowledge which, intruding into the dress and attitudes of the Greek figures done by modern painters, steals from their pictures so much of natural passion, and makes us think more of the modern studio than of the childhood of the world. Odd then as the *Œsacus and Hesperie*, and the *Procris and Cephalus* seem to the scholar, they are poetical with that poetry which belongs to the early time when mortal men loved the daughters of the woods and streams. By force of their childlikeness they realize the childhood of the world. And they are, to use Milton's phrase, simple, sensuous, and passionate.

In this plate, the temper in which the story is conceived is the temper of a child; no one can mistake

the simplicity of its thought. That which is passionate in it arises out of Turner's intense feeling for the trouble which is already threatening the unconscious youth of Œsacus and Hesperie. That feeling speaks from his heart to us out of the quiet and the light. It was with passionate intention that he drenched in lovely sunshine the glade where the serpent was hiding, like sorrow behind happiness. The landscape is loveliest because of the human love and sorrow it enshrines. And the sensuous element which enwraps the maiden and her lover is all pervading, and lies in the lavish and exquisite beauty of the dell, fed by the stream, pierced by the searching of the daylight.

Hesperie is the centre of the drawing. The sunlight falls upon her as in Ovid's story, and in its heat she dries her hair; her father, the stream Cebrenus, flows towards her, breaking in music and light over the rocks, sweeping round to greet her and to reflect her beauty. The pathway from the hills beyond leads down to her, and Œsacus in surprise and joy has just discovered her. Seated exactly under the point where the great trunk separates she is placed in the very heart of the drawing, like a figure under a great arch; and as if to enshrine her further, a lovely bush flings from the bank above her its drooping foliage, and seems to encanopy her with all its plumes. The bending branch, which shoots downwards out of the tree, and which gleams in the brightest light, points to her. Another branch, striking downwards in the same manner, points towards Œsacus. Both

branches, in their repetition of each other, seem to bind together the fates of the maiden and her lover; and on him, as the source of her death and the victim of his own love, the broadest sunbeam directly shines. These are the places where Nature is bent by Turner to impassionate the story with her sympathy.

With regard to matters of technical interest, the exquisite etching of this plate, and the skill with which it has been reserved for mezzotint—many of the branches and stems of the trees being engraved in pure mezzotint—have been so often spoken of, that I content myself by quoting in the Appendix various passages on this subject. But I may here repeat that by this time Turner had submitted himself to the laws which govern mezzotint engraving, and that here he has played no such pranks with his tools as he did in the *Inverary Pier*. The extraordinary delicacy of the engraving of the foliage, seen in shadow and light through the flood of sunshine; the rocks, changing in gradation and colour at every instant, and the dark pool with its delicate touches of light; the beautiful passage at the head of the glade where the arrowy sunlight darts across the wooded hill beyond, and the tiny space of pure sky—are all the work of a painter who has learnt the perfect trick of mezzotint engraving.

One broad band of light, in the midst, divides the picture into three parts, and this band is broken up by the great tree-trunk whose darkness enhances the sunshine. The trunk is varied at every point of its outline by exquisite

curves, and over its whole surface by lovely touchings in of moss and fern, by little shadowy hollows and foldings in the wood. It is a stem that has had many experiences, and Turner has cared for them all. The sun-rays that slant from the left are met in opposing slopes, first by the descending sweep of the path, and then by the curve of the great tree-trunk on the right, and both these systems of opposed lines are united and clasped by the arc which the stream makes below. To relieve them, there is on one side the intricate and beautiful assemblage of the branches which bend right and left over the pool and the soft falling of the foliage behind them—and on the other, the upright branches and vertical stems of trees which rise one after another till they reach the entrance of the glade, where three of them stand like a gate. And lest this arrangement should be too marked, a tree and branches of trees extend across the descending way. Distance is given to the path by the inverted arch made by the meeting of the two great trunks below. And above, to clasp together the whole composition, two boughs, starting from the two most distant trees, form an arch through which in all its mystery—the mystery which always haunts us when we are deep in a dell, and see on high among the trees the passage into the open lands—

> "Gleams that untravelled world whose margin fades
> For ever and for ever as we move."

PART XIV.

ISSUED JANUARY 1, 1819.

No. LXVII.

EAST GATE, WINCHELSEA, SUSSEX.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* S. W. REYNOLDS.

TURNER was fond of this Winchelsea subject, and I daresay that the decaying town touched him with tenderness. One of the Cinque ports, it flourished once, but the sea was pushed away from it, and it died down into a few houses. Three ruined gates remain, and the remnant of a castle. He was pleased with this low gate on the top of the hill, and the narrow road that led steeply up to it, and the stretched-out plains below over which the clouds rested barred and still at evening.

In the engraving of Winchelsea in the "England and Wales," we see the gate from the plain below, and a regiment of soldiers climbing the hill and passing through it. A thunderstorm with heavy rain redoubles the impression of war, and the landscape, so quiet here, gleams in the lightning.

In the previous *Winchelsea* in the Liber Studiorum we are placed outside the gate, and in front of the castle tower. The hill on which it stands is lowered and extended, and the plain is seen with sunlighted clouds above it, and far-off showers of rain. Sheep are descending the road, and they strike the note of pastoral peace. The same note is struck in this drawing of the *East Gate, Winchelsea.* There has been heavy rain, but light and quiet now fill the afternoon sky; the feeding sheep wander over the castle ruins and through the broken walls, and the trees grow at their own undisturbed will among the tumbled masonry. There is no need now of defending the town, and Turner makes the sunshine fall upon the road and through the gate in quiet blessing; and the storm has left the sky, as the days of war have passed away from English land. Nor yet does he forget that the place was once on the sea, and that now it is still near the sea. For close at hand goes the fisherman, his shrimping-net upon his shoulder.

I do not know whether Turner had any regret for the days of the Castle's greatness, but I am sure he had pity for the ruined tower. Shapeless as it is, the trees are gracious to it, and lean towards it as if they would clothe it and caress it. They are young ash trees, and no tree is so lovely among ruins. Nothing can be prettier than their disposition along the ridge, nothing more close to the fact than the way Turner has attached their stems to the broken ground, and so drawn the windings of their roots that they tell of the masonry hidden beneath the grass.

The gate is naturally the chief object in the composition, and it is upon the lines of its arch that the drawing is worked. The crumbling wall of masonry below the castle and the trees of the mound both repeat the descending line of the arch, and we feel—through this series of falling curves, and through the streaming down of the sheep on the hill side, and through the space of sky so skilfully set with its horizontal lines between the falling lines of the hill and of the arch—that the road beyond the gate rushes downward to the plain. The very direction of the handle of the shrimping-net points to the same thing.

There are a number of things which may be said in a scattered way about the composition. The two tall masses of trees on either hand frame the whole drawing, as the two sides of the gate-wall and of the trees above them frame and lift the tower. The two trees on the left had to be sent into the air. Turner continues the trunk of the nearest by the figure of the sailor below, and the thing is done. Again, the hill on which the castle stands was very close to the gate. It was necessary to make it stand back. Therefore, Turner detains the eye—amusing it from point to point—by a series of interests; first by the ferns in the foreground, then by the sheep passing through the wall, then by broken ground, then by the descending sheep, then by the wild figure of the shepherd (see how his crook and arms force the eye to run upwards and set the castle high as the hill), then again by the broken ground on the hill.

The portion of the hill seen through the arch is also made to recede, first, and most skilfully, by the clear space at the bottom of the arch in full light, secondly by the sheep, and thirdly by the shepherd. He and his companion are necessary to the drawing. They are elements of the landscape rather than figures, and used as such alone. Indeed, they have no features. Lastly, the strong vertical lines of tower, walls, and gate are contrasted, softened, and harmonized by the horizontal and curved lines of the two flocks of sheep, and by the wild growth of the trees on the hill which, following their own sweet will, have fallen into lovely branching and found for themselves an outline full of grace.

No. LXVIII.

ISIS.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* W. SAY.

THIS is a scene in Petworth Park, and the temple behind the trees beside the lake is called the temple of Isis, and gives its name to the engraving. Turner liked the place and liked its owner Lord Egremont for whom he made some pictures. There is an oil sketch of the park at sunset in the National Gallery, painted with great swiftness and delight, and as characteristic of Turner's methods of painting as it is of his sympathy with the wild and threatening aspects of Nature. "Storm is coming" the picture seems to cry, and it is a frequent cry at the end of Turner's brush and in his soul.

But this drawing here engraved does not speak of storm, but of peace. It is a vapour-veiled summer afternoon, but the clouds are so penetrated with showering sunlight that the earth and water are belted with sheen and shadow. In one place alone, behind the temple of Isis, abides a depth, a hollow place of darkness, and I

daresay it is too fantastical to think that Turner, struck by the name, symbolized in this gloom the solemn mysteries of the Nature Goddess. At any rate, in this corner, overcast with trees, wept over by the willows, with the point of light made by the poising bird and a few reflected gleams to intensify the gloom—lies the mass of shadow which, by contrast, expands and makes joyful the rest of the landscape. The temple, and the trees—and mark how the two trees above the temple repeat the outline of the temple, and dignify it by the repetition—are massed together with nobility and variety, and yet in the classical manner; but the weeping willow is entirely modern, and is a direct study from nature. Still more natural, pre-Raphaelite in careful truth, are the weeds and flowers and undergrowth, in the midst of which rises the broken piece of classic frieze on which the peacock sits. But they are also carefully composed into groups and into a whole. Turner composed instinctively, but not a touch seems to have been put in without thought, not a single leaf to have been drawn without considering its relation to the sharp lines and angles of the fragment of carven stone. The peacock, with all his curves, is the centre and harmonizer of the whole. Nothing is neglected, and the use made of the sunlight that falls between the two pillars of the temple on the wet steps below shows what a great artist can do with his materials when his thought is fully awake.

The landscape beyond the bridge, the broken hill, the belt of trees below, through the stems of which the sun-

light shines, the lake with all its subtle reflections, is the landscape of the ancient park of an English gentleman; quiet, untouched for centuries. Turner was pleased to paint it, but at present he cared most to draw his bit of wild vegetation. As to the strange introduction of the classic frieze and the peacock in a place where they could not naturally be, he may have seen such an incident in the garden at Petworth or elsewhere, and been impressed by its grace and colour, and its use for a composition like this drawing. It adds both beauty and vitality and a classic cry to a somewhat dull subject. Nor is this the only time that he has used it for this purpose. A similar group occurs in the foreground of the *Frontispiece*.

No. LXIX.

BEN ARTHUR.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* THOMAS LUPTON.

HOW different, and how much deeper is Turner's passion for his work when he passes from the higher Alps to the lower mountains, anyone may well see who compares this noble drawing of *Ben Arthur* with the *Source of the Arveron*, or with the *Mer de Glace*. The fact is that Nature in the higher Alps does not, and cannot interest the artist to the same point as gentler landscape.

For first, Nature is there too vast to be grasped, too overwhelming in force. The vastness is too great for the artist's power of representation, and he chafes both against the size and also against the multitudinous repetition of the scenery. Turner has tried to paint this immense Nature. Now and then he has succeeded, but no one else has approached his success.

Secondly, the impressions received are of magnificence and of gloom rather than of loveliness. Turner painted the Alpine magnificence in a few drawings only, but he

recorded, and with amazing power in a greater number of drawings, his impressions of the Alpine gloom—of the destroying power, the desolation, the ruin, the terror, the lonely majesty of Nature among the higher peaks. Yet he always descends with pleasure from the heights. He had soon exhausted what he had to say.

Thirdly, the same kind of impression is constantly made by Alpine scenery. The long valleys, the steep sides of them, with the same pines all of one pattern marching up their slopes, the gorges, the desolate tarns, the waterfalls, even the grassy uplands, the glaciers, the peaks have all much the same character. After a time they become monotonous, and their colouring is also monotonous, and more than monotonous. It is too violent, too bitter in its contrasts and in its hues. It astonishes rather than charms a painter. It has but little sentiment of its own, and what it has, though not easily grasped, is not manifold.

Fourthly, if we exclude the laborious roads which traverse the high passes, the scenery of the lofty regions of the Alps is devoid of all the thought and emotion which belongs to the history and presence of Humanity. Among the uninhabited snows and rocks, in the midst of never-ceasing decay and ruin, that passionate emotion of the heart for Man which is the true ground in the artist's soul of all noble landscape painting is not awakened. On the wastes of ice above the *Source of the Arveron*, or on the *Mer de Glace*, we do not hear the 'still sad music of humanity.'

It is in the lower ranges that the mountain-artist finds his true field of work. Destruction is not there so fierce, ruin is covered there by the loving-kindness of the grass and trees, there is pathos and tenderness in the midst of the glory, there is sunlight and change in the midst of the gloom, there is softer and richer colour, there is endless variety; and with the variety there is a deeper sentiment in Nature herself, and a greater and more varied number of impressions are received from her. And above all, the soul of Humanity, everywhere mingled there with the soul of Nature, warms and refreshes the heart of the artist, restores and quickens his hand.

Turner felt, as he drew his *Ben Arthur*, that this lonely valley had seen a thousand shepherds lead their sheep among its mossy stones in summer, and save them in the winter snow. In the stream many a voyager had quenched his thirst, and it was such a lonely and rock-strewn grassy place as a lover, whom love had made a poet, would wander in when love made him seek for solitude. Turner does not put one human being into it, but it is full of the sentiment of humanity. And all the wild highland romance, and that natural superstition, urged by which Celt and German peopled the stony streams and moors and mountain valleys with supernatural beings at war or at peace with mankind, were in the painter's mind as he drew the winding of the stream among its rocks, and the long retreating reaches of the valley, and the portentous sky overhead, and set the wild peaks against the breaking of the light.

As to the drawing of the piece—it is done with absolute mastery. No geologist after years of draughtsmanship could draw the anatomy of the mountain on the left with greater skill, and of course he could not draw the mountain itself at all. A physiologist might outline a skeleton with cleverness, but it takes Titian to paint a man.

In the photograph the details of the gully in this mountain, down which in winter the water leaps, and which is full of tumbled stones, are not to be seen. But there is not a piece of rock in it, nor a turn in the involved arrangement of its stones, which is not a transcript of Nature, a record in a small space of the ways by which the mountain gullies are formed and made beautiful for thought. Nor are the various windings of the valley-stream, caused by the stones which have with different impetus rolled down the differing slopes of the hills on either side, drawn with less care and truth. Each little pier of rocks, as we walk down the vale from its head, is a study from Nature. At last we come to that which fills the whole foreground, an old moraine, in whose rents, as in those made by the same conditions in the moraine drawn in the *Source of the Arveron*, trees have rooted themselves—dwarf-oak that best resists the wind—but which here, in the wild weather of this desolate pass, cannot come to any perfection. The slow and careful thinking and modelling with which these great rocks are engraved make me feel that Turner himself had some hand in them, or that he overlooked Lupton's work day by day.

Over all darkens the sky, overwhelming, brooding, full of rain as a cup about to overflow; solemnizing still more the solemn valley. The cloud that to the left and in light lifts slowly is perhaps too heavy, but that may be the engraver's fault. At any rate, as much pains has been taken with the sky as with the rest, and few things in the whole of the Liber Studiorum are more full of awe than the barred clouds below the distant peak, and the barred clouds above it—varied for the sake of greater awfulness, those below horizontal, those above oblique—between which is the double-headed mountain, looking forth from among the sunlight of storm over valley and sky and stream, and calling, like a King of clouds, to its brother mountains far and near.

No. LXX.

INTERIOR OF A CHURCH.

Drawn and Engraved by J. M. W. TURNER.

TURNER engraved the whole of the *Interior of a Church* with his own hand, and though the subject, so far as it was in the realm of sentiment, gave him no interest whatever, yet there is no plate in the whole of the Liber Studiorum on which he has spent more care and trouble.

The history of the plate may partly account for this. The etching was originally a soft ground etching, and Turner worked his mezzotint over that to produce a daylight effect in the church. When this was partly done, he was dissatisfied with the result, as he well might be, for it was ugly and unsuccessful. He tried again, adding more mezzotint, and again he failed. Then he determined to have a candlelight effect, such as we have here, and he continued putting on at different stages more and more of mezzotint. He was thus driven to make the engraving very elaborate, and being so driven, he began to be fond of it, and to take an extraordinary interest in rendering the play

of light and shade among the old pillars and on the roof, upon the hatchments and walls, and in the recesses of the church. If the reader will go and see a good proof, and look at the engraving of the hatchment, of the lamp, of the balustrade in the foreground, of the breaking up of the light on the wall behind the pulpit, of the curtain across the churchwarden's pew, of the king's arms, he will know, if he has eyes to see, that the work has been done with a keen desire to make it as perfect and finished as possible. There is not a quarter of an inch in which the tremble of light and shade has not been studied and worked: and the same is true, but with less elaboration, of every portion of the roof. He will also see that owing to continual re-mezzotinting, the texture of the surface is almost that of an old water-colour drawing. But he will not see these things unless he look at a very early impression. This exquisite finish was too fine to endure many printings. It was as evanescent as it was subtle.

The pleasure the plate gives is almost altogether a technical pleasure, but a certain thoughtful sentiment belongs to the contrast in it between the Romanesque architecture that leads us back to the time when Norman piety built the church and it was filled with a splendid worship, and the later work which set up the pews and the balustrades and the pulpit and the king's arms and the ten commandments, and with them that half-dead religious service of Turner's time which here is represented. And the solitary and ragged banner which hangs

from the pillar emphasizes the contrast between this cold belief and ceremony, and the days when men fought for the faith and there was some romance in the forms of its worship.

But I do not think that Turner thought of this. We see what he did think of, and with what grim truth and satire. The ponderous dulness of the congregation, the merciless treatment of their faces, the indifference of the clergyman who reads the service, may perhaps reflect Turner's feelings towards the Church as it was at this time. Or they may represent, as Ruskin seems to say, his boyish memories of the services of the Church of England. There is but one touch of sympathetic feeling in the whole, and it illustrates Turner's constant sympathy with the poor. It is in the quiet, humble figures of the old woman and the girl who stand neglected without the pew. It is a little story in itself, and a symbol also, wherever it is seen, of the decay of religion.

No. LXXI.

CHRIST AND THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA.

Drawn and Etched by J. M. W. TURNER. *Engraved by* S. W. REYNOLDS.

I DO not know why Turner chose this subject, unless he wished to rival Claude, who often made drawings from the Gospel Story. Claude was wholly indifferent to the reality of the Christian subjects on which he worked; and we see that Turner cared as little for them. The truth is that Turner was as entirely free from any theological or religious interests as Keats himself. Keats, who stood between the passing away of the great excitement of the Revolution, and the uprising of a number of new political and religious movements in 1830, began to think and write during a parenthesis of dulness in English society. "Glory and loveliness," he cried, "have passed away," and there are many lines, in "Endymion" and in other poems, where he expresses his sense of his despondence, of the inhuman dearth of noble natures, of the gloomy days in which he lived. No impulse came upon

him from popular thought, for the soul of England was wearied; and he fled from his "o'er darkened ways" to seek for poetic subjects in Greek and mediæval life. Turner, also, after he had recorded Trafalgar and Waterloo, ceased to have any interest in modern English life, except so far as he told in these prints the miserable tale of the English peasant. He, too, went to Greece for some subjects, but chiefly loved to paint, as he has done so much in this book, the feeling that he had for the mediæval castle, town, and abbey; for their departed glory, for their majesty over river and plain, for their dead romance and lost religion. But when he painted church or abbey, it was the pathetic sadness of the passing away of life and power from religion which affected him most, and flowed with his pencil—it was not the religion itself. And all his life long, I do not see in his work one trace of his mind being influenced by any personal religious thought.

Of all the scenes in the Gospels, this scene of Jesus with the woman of Samaria is the one which would most touch an artist who had any care for high religious thinking; yet it is plain that Turner had not one idea belonging to it which might not come into the head of a national schoolboy. The Apostles are like uneducated monks, and the figure of Jesus is borrowed from a New Testament illustrated with rude woodcuts which was published about the date of this engraving. Yet, to a certain degree, he has striven to state what he thought the truth, and it is his childlike naïveté which, as in other subjects,

saves the figures from vulgarity. The entrance to the town is a reminiscence of a gate in the Aurelian wall, and the architectural blocks are like those scattered through the gardens of the Roman palaces.

When all this has been said, there remains the fact that the massing of light and shade is good, and that there is a certain fine style in the drawing. Nevertheless, the same may be said of this composition as I have said of some others in this book. We are not accustomed in work of this conventional type to have natural objects drawn with accuracy, and the truth to nature with which the trees and the brushwood are represented jars on our sense of fitness in the midst of the artificial work. It is a Nemesis which falls on Turner for imitating Claude.

The etching of the delicate trees, which, like the almond trees on the Aventine, grow under this wall, and of the great trees on the right—as beautiful a study of foliage and boughs as any in the Liber Studiorum—is full of life, the branches are instinct with the forces of growth from the stems to their points, and the passage of wild leaping foliage along the ridge of the hill is lovely. The sky is somewhat common-place, but Turner could not make his skies altogether conventional. It had thought in it, but it has, I think, been spoilt by the engraver. On the whole, there is nothing but the trees which is worthy of our interest, and the interest of their truth is apart from the picture and the subject. If they are true, the rest is conventional.

It is a little sad to say farewell to the Liber Studiorum

with a subject so inferior to many of the others; and some day I hope I may persuade those who possess the unpublished Plates to allow them to be photographed, and to permit me to comment on them. But we may well be content that these seventy-one plates were finished and published before Turner began to think it not worth his while to publish the rest. For through what a wonderful world we have been led, with what noble teaching and telling of truth has it not been filled—and how romantic!

APPENDIX.

EVERY one who reads these notes of mine will see how largely I have been indebted to the writings of Mr. Ruskin, and I owe to him the knowledge, principles, or insight which may have enabled me to feel the truth and beauty of these drawings. He has increased tenfold the joy of the world in all things which are just, and true, and lovely, and of good report in Nature and in Art, and uplifted the moral, spiritual, and passionate nature of man into the world where joy is noble and given to noble things. Whatever he has written on this great work of Turner's has been written in that spirit—a spirit penetrative with sympathy and imagination, and directed by a will towards truth. What is written on this special book is not much, but it has taught others to strive to write in a similar way. I have tried to do so, with the unequal steps of the child who followed Æneas. But this book would not be complete did I not quote whatever he has said concerning the plates which have been

photographed therein. Therefore I quote here, first, his general statement concerning the scope of the work, and, secondly, his remarks on some of the plates.

TAKE up the Liber Studiorum, and observe how this feeling of decay and humiliation gives solemnity to all its simplest subjects; even to his view of daily labour. I have marked its tendency in examining the design of the "Mill and Lock," but observe its continuance through the book. There is no exultation in thriving city or mart, or in happy rural toil, or harvest gathering—only the grinding at the mill, and patient striving with hard conditions of life. Observe the two disordered and poor farmyards, cart and ploughshare and harrow rotting away; note the pastoral by the brook side, with its neglected stream, and haggard trees, and bridge with the broken rail; and decrepit children—fever struck—one sitting stupidly by the stagnant stream, the other in rags, and with an old man's hat on, and lame, leaning on a stick. Then the "Hedging and Ditching" with its bleak sky and blighted trees, hacked and bitten and starved by the clay soil into something between trees and firewood; its meanly-faced, sickly labourers, pollard labourers, like the willow trunk they hew; and the slatternly peasant woman, with worn cloak and battered bonnet—an English Dryad. Then the Water-Mill, beyond the fallen steps, overgrown with the thistle; itself a ruin, mud-built at first, now propped on both sides; the planks torn from its cattle shed; a feeble beam, splintered at the end, set against the dwelling house from the ruined pier of the watercourse; the old millstone—useless for many a day—half buried in slime, at the bottom of the wall; the listless children, listless dog, and the poor gleaner bringing her single sheaf to be ground. Then the "Peat Bog" with its cold, dark rain, and dangerous labour. And last and chief, the mill in the valley of the Chartreuse. Another than Turner would have painted the convent, but he had no sympathy with the hope, no mercy for the indolence,

of the monk. He painted the mill in the valley—precipice overhanging it, and evil of dark forest round; blind rage and strength of mountain torrent rolled beneath it,—calm sunset above, but fading from the glen, leaving it to its roar of passionate waters and sighing of pine branches in the night.

Such is his view of human labour. Of human pride, see what records—Morpeth Tower, roofless and black; gate of Winchelsea wall, the flock of sheep driven *round* it, not through it, and Rievaulx choir, and Kirkstall Crypt; and Dunstanborough, wan above the sea; and Chepstow, with arrowy light through traceried window; and Lindisfarne, with failing height of wasted shaft and wall; and last and sweetest, Raglan, in utter solitude, amidst the wild wood of its own pleasance; the towers rounded with ivy, and the forest roots choked with undergrowth, and the brook languid amidst lilies and sedges. Legends of gray knights and enchanted ladies keeping the woodman's children away at the sunset.

These are his types of human pride. Of human love: Procris, dying by the arrow; Hesperie, by the viper's fang; and Rizpah, more than dead, beside her children.

Such are the lessons of the Liber Studiorum. Silent always with a bitter silence, disdaining to tell his meaning, when he saw there was no ear to receive it; Turner only indicated his purpose by slight words of contemptuous anger, when he heard of anyone's trying to obtain this or the other separate subject as more beautiful than the rest. "What is the use of them," he said, "but together?" The meaning of the entire book was symbolized in the frontispiece, which he engraved with his own hand. Tyre at Sunset, with the Rape of Europa, indicating the symbolism of the decay of Europe by that of Tyre, its beauty passing away into terror and judgment (Europa being the mother of Minos and Rhadamanthus).—*Modern Painters*, vol. v., p. 336.

JASON.

TAKE up Turner's Jason, Liber Studiorum, and observe how the imagination can concentrate all this and infinitely more, into one moment. No forest country, no secret paths, nor cloven hills; nothing but a gleam of pale horizontal sky, that broods over pleasant places far away, and sends in, through the wild overgrowth of the thicket, a ray of broken daylight into the hopeless pit. No flaunting plumes nor brandished lances, but stern purpose in the turn of the crestless helmet, visible victory in the drawing back of the prepared right arm behind the steady point. No more claws, nor teeth, nor manes, nor stinging tails. We have the dragon, like everything else, by the middle. We need say no more of him. All his horror is in that fearful, slow, gliding upheaval of the single coil. Spark after spark of it, ring after ring, is sliding into the light, the slow glitter steals along him step by step, broader and broader, a lighting of funeral lamps one by one, quicker and quicker; a moment more, and he is out upon us, all crash and blaze, among those broken trunks;—but he will be nothing then to what he is now. . . . Now observe in this work of Turner that the whole value of it depends upon the character of curve assumed by the serpent's body; for had it been a mere semicircle, or gone down in a series of smaller coils, it would have been, in the first case, ridiculous, as unlike a serpent, or, in the second, disgusting, nothing more than an exaggerated viper; but it is that *coming straight* at the right hand which suggests the drawing forth of an enormous weight, and gives the bent part its springing look, that frightens us. Again, remove the light trunk on the left, and observe how useless all the gloom of the picture would have been, if this trunk had not given it depth and *hollowness*. Finally and chiefly, observe that the painter is not satisfied even with all the suggestiveness thus obtained, but to make sure of us, and force us, whether we will or not, to walk his way, and not ours, the trunks of the trees on the right are all

cloven into yawning and writhing heads and bodies, and alive with dragon energy all about us; note especially the nearest with its gaping jaws and claw-like branch at the seeming shoulder; a kind of suggestion which in itself is not imaginative, but merely fanciful (using the term fancy in that third sense not yet explained, corresponding to the third office of imagination); but it is imaginative in its present use and application, for the painter addresses thereby that morbid and fearful condition of mind which he has endeavoured to excite in the spectator, and which in reality would have seen in every trunk and bough, as it penetrated into the deeper thicket, the object of its terror.—*Modern Painters*, vol. ii., p. 166.

THE WINDMILL AND LOCK.

TAKE, therefore, a windmill, forming the principal subject in his (Stanfield's) drawing of "Brittany near Dol" (engraved in the "Coast Scenery"), and beside it I place a windmill, which forms also the principal subject in Turner's study of the Lock, in the Liber Studiorum. At first sight, I dare say, the reader may like Stanfield's best; and there is indeed a great deal more in it to attract liking. Its roof is nearly as interesting as a piece of stony peak on a mountain, with a châlet built on its side; and it is exquisitely varied in swell and curve. Turner's roof, on the contrary, is a plain, ugly gable—a windmill and nothing more. Stanfield's sails are twisted into most effective wrecks, as beautiful as pine-bridges over Alpine streams; only they do not look as if they had ever been serviceable windmill-sails; they are bent about in cross and awkward ways, as if they were warped or cramped, and their timbers look heavier than necessary. Turner's sails have no beauty about them, like that of Alpine bridges; but they have the exact switchy-sway of the sail that is always straining against the wind; and the timbers form clearly the lightest possible framework for the canvas, thus showing the essense of wind-

mill sail. Then the clay wall of Stanfield's mill is as beautiful as a piece of chalk cliff, all worn into furrows by the rain, coated with mosses, and rooted to the ground by a heap of crumbled stone, embroidered with grass and creeping plants. But this is not a serviceable state for a windmill to be in. The essence of a windmill as distinguished from all other mills, is, that it should turn round, and be a spinning thing, ready always to face the wind; as light, therefore, as possible, and as vibratory; so that it is in nowise good for it to approximate itself to the nature of chalk cliffs.

Now observe how completely Turner has chosen his mill so as to mark this great fact of windmill nature; how high he has set it; how slenderly he has supported it, how he has built it all of wood; how he has bent the lower planks so as to give the idea of the building lapping over the pivot on which it rests inside; and how, finally, he has insisted on the great leverage of the beam behind it, while Stanfield's lever looks more like a prop than a thing to turn the roof with. And he has done all this fearlessly, though none of these elements of form are pleasant ones in themselves, but tend, on the whole, to give a somewhat mean and spider-like look to the principal feature in his picture, and then, finally, because he could not get the windmill dissected, and show us the real heart and centre of the whole, behold, he has put a pair of old millstones, *lying outside*, at the bottom of it. These—the first cause and motive of all the fabric—laid at its foundation; and, beside them, the cart which is to fulfil the end of the fabric's being, and take home the sacks of flour. So far of what each painter chooses to draw. But do not fail also to consider the spirit in which it is drawn. Observe, that though all this ruin has befallen Stanfield's mill, Stanfield is not in the least sorry for it. On the contrary, he is delighted, and evidently thinks it the most fortunate thing possible. The owner is ruined, doubtless, or dead, but his mill forms an admirable object in our view of Brittany. . . . Not so, Turner. *His* mill is still serviceable; but for all that, he feels somewhat pensive about it. It is a poor property, and evidently the owner of it has enough to do to get his own bread out from between its stones. Moreover, there

is a dim type of all melancholy human labour in it—catching the free winds, and setting them to turn grindstones. It is poor work for the winds, and better, indeed, than drowning sailors or tearing down forests, but not their proper work of marshalling the clouds, and bearing the wholesome rains to a place where they are ordered to fall, and fanning the flowers and the leaves when they are faint with heat. Turning round a couple of stones, for the mere pulverization of human food, is not noble work for the winds. So, also, of all low labour to which one sets human souls. It is better than no labour; and, in a still higher degree, better than destructive, wandering imagination; but yet, that grinding in the darkness, for mere food's sake, must be melancholy work enough for many a living creature. All men have felt it so; and this grinding at the mill, whether it be breeze or soul that is set to it, we cannot much rejoice in. Turner has no joy of his mill. It shall be dark against the sky, yet proud, and on the hilltop; not ashamed of its labour, and brightened from beyond, the golden clouds stooping over it, and the calm summer sun, going down behind, far away, to his rest.—*Modern Painters*, vol. iv., p. 7.

THE CRYPT OF KIRKSTALL ABBEY.

BEAUTY and freedom and peace; and yet another teacher graver than these. Sound preaching at last here in Kirkstall Crypt, concerning fate and life. Here, where the dark pool reflects the chancel pillars, and the cattle lie in an unhindered rest, the soft sunshine on their dappled bodies, instead of priests' vestments; their white furry hair, ruffled a little, fitfully by the evening wind, deep scented from the meadow thyme.—*Modern Painters*, vol. v., p. 298.

PROCRIS AND CEPHALUS.

BUT for immediate and close illustration, it is perhaps best to refer to a work more accessible, the Cephalus and Procris of Turner in the Liber Studiorum. I know of no landscape more purely, or magnificently imaginative, or bearing more distinct evidence of the relative and simultaneous conception of the parts. Let the reader first cover with his hand the two trunks that rise against the sky on the right, and ask himself how any termination of the central mass so *ugly* as the straight trunk which he will then painfully see, could have been conceived or admitted without *simultaneous conception* of the trunks he has taken away on the right? Let him again conceal the whole central mass, and leave these two only, and again ask himself whether anything so ugly as that bare trunk in the shape of a Y, could have been admitted without reference to the central mass? Then let him remove from this trunk its two arms, and try the effect; let him again remove the single trunk on the extreme right; then let him try the third trunk without the excrescence at the bottom of it; finally let him conceal the fourth trunk from the right, with the slender boughs at the top; he will find in each case, that he has destroyed a feature on which everything else depends; and if proof be required of the vital power of still smaller features, let him remove the sunbeam that comes through beneath the faint mass of trees on the hill in the distance.—*Modern Painters*, vol. ii., p. 155.

I suppose few in looking at the Cephalus and Procris of Turner, note the sympathy of those faint rays that are just drawing back and dying between the trunks of the far-off forest, with the ebbing life of the nymph, unless, indeed, they happen to recollect the same sympathy marked by Shelley in the Alastor.—*Modern Painters*, vol ii., p. 201.

SUBJECTS OF THE LIBER STUDIORUM.

I DO not know at what time the painter first went abroad, but among the earliest of the series of the Liber Studiorum (dates 1808, 1809) occur the magnificent Mont St. Gothard, and Little Devil's Bridge. Now it is remarkable that after his acquaintance with this scenery, so congenial in almost all respects with the energy of his mind, and supplying him with materials of which in these two subjects, and in the Chartreuse, and several others afterwards, he showed both his entire appreciation and command, the proportion of English to foreign subjects should in the rest of the work be more than two to one; and that those English subjects should be—many of them—of a kind peculiarly simple, and of everyday occurrence; such as the Pembury Mill, the Farm Yard composition with the White Horse, that with the cocks and pigs, Hedging and Ditching, Watercress Gatherers (scene at Twickenham), and the beautiful and solemn rustic subject called a Watermill; and that the architectural subjects, instead of being taken, as might have been expected of an artist so fond of treating effects of extended space, from some of the enormous continental masses, are almost exclusively British; Rivaulx, Holy Island, Dumblain, Dunstanborough, Chepstow, St. Catherine's, Greenwich Hospital, An English Parish Church, A Saxon ruin, and an exquisite reminiscence of the English Lowland castle in the pastoral with the brook, wooden bridge, and wild duck; to all of which we have nothing foreign to oppose but three slight, ill-considered, and unsatisfactory subjects, from Basle, Lauffenbourg, and Thun; and, farther, not only is the preponderance of subject British, but of affection also; for it is strange with what fulness and completion the home subjects are treated in comparison with the greater part of the foreign ones. Compare the figures and sheep in the Hedging and Ditching and the East Gate, Winchelsea, together with the near leafage, with the puzzled foreground, and inappropriate figures of the Lake of Thun; or the cattle and road of the

St. Catherine's Hill, with the foreground of the Bonneville; or the exquisite figure with the sheaf of corn in the Water-mill, with the vintagers of the Grenoble subject.

In his foliage the same predilections are remarkable. Reminiscences of English willows by the brook, and English forest glades mingle even with the heroic feeling of the Æsacus and Hesperie, and the Cephalus; into the pine, whether of Switzerland or the glorious Stone, he cannot enter, or enters at his peril, like Ariel. Those of the valley of Chamounix are fine masses, better pines than other people's, but not a bit like pines for all that: he feels his weakness, and tears them off the distant mountains with the mercilessness of an avalanche. The Stone pines of the two Italian compositions are fine in their arrangement, but they are very pitiful pines; the glory of the Alpine rose he never touches; he mounches chesnuts with no relish; never has learned to like olives; and by the vine, we find him in the foreground of the Grenoble Alps laid utterly and incontrovertibly on his back.—*Modern Painters*, vol. i., p. 125.

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FROM the great Venetian school of landscape Turner received much important teaching,—almost the only healthy teaching which he owed to preceding art. The designs of the Liber Studiorum are founded first on nature, but in many cases modified by *forced* imitation of Claude, and *fond* imitation of Titian. All the worst and feeblest studies in the book—as the pastoral with the nymph playing the tambourine, that with the long bridge seen through trees, and with the flock of goats on the walled road—owe the principal part of their imbecilities to Claude; another group (Solway Moss, Peat Bog, Lauffenbourg, &c.) is taken with hardly any modification by pictorial influence, straight from nature; and the finest works in the book—The Grande Chartreuse, Rizpah, Jason, Cephalus, and one or two more—are strongly under the influence of Titian.

BEN ARTHUR.

IN the opposite plate [see *Modern Painters*, vol. iv., p. 315,] the upper two subjects are by Turner, foregrounds out of the Liber Studiorum ["Source of Arveron," and "Ben Arthur"]; the lower, by Claude, Liber Veritatis, No. 5. I think the reader cannot but feel that the blocks in the upper two subjects are massy and ponderous; in the lower, wholly without weight. If he examine their several treatment, he will find that Turner has perfect imaginative conception of every recess and projection over the whole surface, and feels the stone as he works over it; every touch, moreover, being full of tender gradation. But Claude, as he is obliged to hold to his outline in hills, so also clings to it in the stones,—cannot round them in the least, leaves their light surfaces wholly blank, and puts a few patches of dark here and there about their edges, as chance will have it.

Turner's way of wedging the stones of the glacier moraine together in strength of disorder, in the upper subject ["Source of the Arveron"], and his indication of the springing of the wild stems and leafage out of the rents in the boulders of the lower one ["Ben Arthur"], will hardly be appreciated unless the reader is fondly acquainted with the kind of scenery in question; and I cannot calculate on this being often the case, for few persons ever look at any near detail closely, and perhaps least of all at the heaps of débris which so often seem to encumber and disfigure mountain ground. But for the various reasons just stated, Turner found more material for his power, and more excitement to his invention, among the fallen stones than in the highest summits of mountains; and his early designs, among their thousand excellences and singularities, as opposed to all that had preceded them, count for not one of the least the elaborate care given to the drawing of torrent beds, shaly slopes, and other conditions of stony ground which all canons of art at the period pronounced inconsistent with dignity of composition; a convenient prin-

ciple, since, of all foregrounds, one of loose stones is beyond comparison the most difficult to draw with any approach to realization.—*Modern Painters*, vol. iv., pp. 315, 316.

SOURCE OF THE ARVERON.

I WISH the reader to fix his attention for a moment on these two great characters of the pine, its straightness and rounded perfectness; both wonderful and in their issue lovely, though they have hitherto prevented the tree from being drawn. I say, first, its straightness. Because we constantly see it in the wildest scenery, we are apt to remember only as characteristic examples of it those which have been disturbed by violent accident or disease. Of course such instances are frequent. The soil of the pine is subject to continual change; perhaps the rock in which it is rooted splits in frost and falls forward, throwing the young stems aslope, or the whole mass of earth round it is undermined by rain, or a huge boulder falls on its stem from above, and forces it for twenty years to grow with weight of a couple of tons leaning on its side. Hence, especially at edges of loose cliffs, about waterfalls, or at glacier banks, and in other places liable to disturbance, the pine may be seen distorted and oblique; and in Turner's "Source of the Arveron," he has, with his usual unerring perception of the main point in any matter, fastened on this means of relating the glacier's history.

The glacier cannot explain its own motion; and ordinary observers saw in it only its rigidity; but Turner saw that the wonderful thing was its non-rigidity. Other ice is fixed, only this ice stirs. All the banks are staggering beneath its waves, crumbling and withered as by the blast of a perpetual storm. He made the rocks of his foreground loose—rolling and tottering down together; the pines smitten aside by them, their tops dead, bared by the ice wind.—*Modern Painters*, vol. v., p. 83.

INTERIOR OF A CHURCH.

I SUPPOSE the boy Turner to have regarded the religion of his city also from an external intellectual standing point. What did he see in Maiden Lane? Let not the reader be offended with me; I am willing to let him describe, at his own pleasure, what Turner saw there; but to me it seems to have been this.

A religion maintained occasionally, even the whole length of the lane, at point of constable's staff; but at other times, placed under the custody of the beadle, within certain black and unstately iron railings of St. Paul's, Covent Garden. Among the wheelbarrows and over the vegetables, no perceptible dominance of religion; in the narrow disquieted streets, none; in the tongues, deeds, daily ways of Maiden Lane, little.

Some honesty, indeed, and English industry, and kindness of heart, and general idea of justice; but faith, of any national kind shut up from one Sunday to the next, not artistically beautiful even in those Sabbatical exhibitions; its paraphernalia being chiefly of high pews, heavy elocution, and cold grimness of behaviour. What chiaroscuro belongs to it—(dependent mostly on candlelight)—we will, however, draw, considerately; no goodliness of escutcheon, no other respectability being omitted, and the best of their results confessed, a meek old woman and a child being let into a pew, for whom the reading by candlelight will be beneficial. . . .

The English Church may, perhaps, accept it as a matter of congratulation, that this is the only instance in which Turner drew a clergyman.—*Modern Painters*, vol. v., p. 297.

WATERCRESS GATHERERS.

BUT a time has now come when Turner recognizes that all is not right with the world—a discovery contemporary, probably, with the more grave one that all was not right within himself. Howsoever it came to

pass, a strange, and in many respects grievous metamorphosis takes place upon him, about the year 1825. Thenceforward he shows clearly the sense of a terrific wrongness and sadness, mingled in the beautiful order of the earth; his work becomes partly satirical, partly reckless, partly—and in its greatest and noblest features—tragic.

This new phase of temper shows itself first in a resolute portraiture of whatever is commonplace and matter-of-fact in life, to take its full place in opposition to the beautiful and heroic. We may trace this intent unmistakably in the Liber Studiorum, where indeed the commonplace prevails to an extent greatly destructive of the value of the series, considered as a whole; the "Hedging and Ditching," "Watercress Gatherers," "Young Anglers," and other such plates, introducing rather discord than true opponent emotion among the grander designs of pastoral and mountain scenery.—*Notes by Mr. Ruskin on his drawings.* Fine Art Society, p. 33.

RIZPAH.

THE effect of Italy upon Turner's mind is very puzzling. On the one hand it gave him the solemnity and power which are manifested in the historical compositions of the Liber Studiorum, more especially the "Rizpah," the "Cephalus, the scene from the "Faery Queen," and the Æsacus and Hesperie": on the other, he seems never to have entered thoroughly into the spirit of Italy, and the materials he obtained there were afterwards but awkwardly introduced in his large compositions.

Of these there are very few at all worthy of him; none but the Liber Studiorum subjects are thoroughly great, and these are great because there is in them the seriousness without the materials of other countries and times. There is nothing particularly indicative of Palestine in the Barley Harvest of the "Rizpah," nor in those round and awful trees; only the solemnity of the south in the lifting of the near burning moon. The rocks of the "Jason" may be seen in any quarry of War-

wickshire sandstone. Jason himself has not a bit of Greek about him—he is a simple warrior of no period in particular, nay, I think there is something of the nineteenth century about his legs. When local character of this classical kind is attempted, the painter is visibly cramped: awkward resemblances to Claude testify the want of his usual forceful originality: in the "Tenth Plague of Egypt," he makes us think of Belzoni rather than of Moses; the Fifth is a total failure; the pyramids look like brick kilns, and the fire running along the ground bears brotherly resemblance to the burning of manure.—See *Modern Painters*, vol. i., p. 128.

ŒSACUS AND HESPERIE.

OF all Turner's etchings this is the most remarkable for the grace and freedom of its branch-drawing. It is a piece of simple brook-scenery, and materials not less graceful exist in abundance in all northern countries which are watered by running streams. Œsacus, the son of Priam, sought Hesperie in the woods: and Turner, with that love for water which characterizes all true landscape painters, has assigned as the place of meeting one of those sweet little solitudes which from time immemorial have been dear to poets and lovers. She is seated on the gently sloping ground at the edge of a shining pool; the water has been lately divided by stones which to the left of the etching rise visibly above its surface, but it pauses at the feet of Hesperie where she sits, as she thinks, alone. Œsacus, still unperceived by her, has just discovered her as he breaks through the branching fern. Over the head of the nymph bends a boldly slanting tree, and where its boughs mingle, to the left, there is a passage of such wild and intricate beauty, that I can scarcely name its equal in the works of the master-etchers. Over the head of Œsacus, and between the trunks of the two principal trees, is a glade so full of tender passages of light, which are chiefly due to the work in mezzotint, that this plate may be taken as a transcendent example of Turner's powers

in both arts. The brilliant freedom of the etched branches, the mellow diffusion of light in the tinted glade, are both achievements of the kind which permanently class an artist. —*Hamerton's Etching and Etchers*, 1st ed., p. 86.

Of the arrangement of the upper boughs, the Œsacus and Hesperie is perhaps the most consummate example; the absolute truth and simplicity, and freedom from anything like fanaticism or animal form, being as marked on the one hand, as the exquisite imaginativeness of the lines on the other.—*Modern Painters*, vol. i., p. 389.

Again, it is impossible to tell whether the two nearest trunks of the Œsacus and Hesperie of the Liber Studiorum, especially the one on the right with the ivy, have been invented or taken straight from nature; they have all the look of accurate portraiture. I can hardly imagine anything so perfect to have been obtained except from the real thing; but we know that the imagination must have begun to operate somewhere, we cannot tell where, since the multitudinous harmonies of the rest of the picture could hardly in any real scene have continued so involuntarily sweet.—*Modern Painters*, vol. ii., p. 157.

BLAIR ATHOL.

THERE is a peculiar stiffness about the curves of wood which separates them completely from animal curves, and which especially defies recollection or invention; it is so subtle that it escapes but too often, even in the most patient study from nature; it lies within the thickness of a pencil line. Farther, the modes of ramification of the upper branches are so varied, inventive, and graceful, that the least alteration of them, even the measure of a hair's-breadth, spoils them; and though it is sometimes possible to get rid of a troublesome bough, accidentally awkward, or in some minor respects to assist the arrangement, yet so far as the real branches are copied, the hand libels their lovely curvatures even in its best attempts to follow them.

These two characters, the woody stiffness hinted through muscular line, and the inventive grace of the upper boughs, have never been rendered except by Turner; he does not merely draw them better than others, but he is the only man who has ever drawn them at all. Of the woody character, the tree subjects of the Liber Studiorum afford marked examples; the Cephalus and Procris, scenes near the Grand Chartreuse and Blair Athol, Juvenile Tricks, and Hedging and Ditching may be particularized; in the England series, the Bolton Abbey is perhaps a more characteristic and thoroughly Turneresque example than any.—*Modern Painters*, vol. i., p. 388.

MONT ST. GOTHARD.

THE pass of the St. Gothard especially, from his earliest days, had kept possession of his mind, not as a piece of mountain scenery but as a marvellous road; and the great drawing which I have tried to illustrate with some care in this book, the last he made of the Alps with unfailing energy, was wholly made to show the surviving of this tormented path through avalanche and storm, from the day when he first drew its two bridges, in the Liber Studiorum.—*Modern Painters*, vol. v., p. 339, note.

And the engraved plate is not only among the finest of the Liber, but is a notable instance of Turner's power of conquering difficulties. For we learn from the following pencil instructions, still remaining in his handwriting, on the margin of a touched proof in the possession of Mr. J. E. Taylor, that the copper had failed in the process of mezzotint working, and proved what is technically called "rotten" in the sky part. Turner writes:—

"My advice is first to fill up the rotten or half lights in No. 1, to make it an equal tint, but lighter near No. 2; the whole of the snow mountain three degrees lighter, and the lights pure paper (and, if you can, take my lines out). 3. Make darker, and sparkling pieces of snow, but not white ones. 4.

Lighter than the sky, the cloud below. 5. Lighter one degree, and fill up the rotten parts towards the side. 5—5. Gradually lighter towards 6; and yet mind all this mass must be lighter than the mountain. 7. These things being well attended to may save the sky."

If proof were needed of the minute care bestowed by the painter on the engraving of the Liber, we have evidence of it here.—*Rawlinson's Catalogue of the Liber Studiorum*, p. 24.